

STAGES AND PHASES OF TRANSFORMATION: THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT
PLACES OF WORSHIP HAVE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH PAST AND
PRESENT ADDICTIONS

BY

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A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

STAGES AND PHASES OF TRANSFORMATION: THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT PLACES OF WORSHIP HAVE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH PAST AND PRESENT ADDICTIONS

By

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Churches have a mandate to help persons with past and present addictions. Both our culture and communities are filled with people who need to be embraced and empowered by the Church. As an Associate Minister of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y., and a thirty-five-year substance abuse survivor, the following statistics alarm me. Out of 68,000¹ residents in Mt. Vernon, less than 2% have sought professional treatment for addictions.² Less than 1% of those in treatment seek it from a church program. Moreover, of the city's five largest churches, there is only one Recovery Ministry providing holistic treatment. If this problem is not addressed, those with past and present addictions will never look to the Church as viable means of recovery.

This Demonstration Project will design a transformational Recovery program at Greater Centennial (using classroom structure) with the intent to duplicate the design in other churches. Results will show that the synchronization of spirituality and education is an innovative means of treatment that the Church can offer people in recovery.

¹U.S. Census Bureau, State & County QuickFax, (Mt. Vernon, New York), <http://quickfax.census.gov> (Accessed October 19, 2011).

² Gary Dollard, e-mail to author, May 15, 2011, Excel spreadsheet with information on "Admissions to NYS OASAS CD Treatment Programs, Mt. Vernon Residents Admissions, CY 2010."

To my grandmother Elizabeth Ryan, who has gone home to be with the Lord, for her love, prayers and wisdom that she shared with me from the time I was born.

To my parents, Arthur and Betty Ryan, who have also gone home to be with the Lord; for the many values they instilled in me that outlasted the multitude of poor choices I made in life. More than anything, I thank them for the principal and practical application of love, which was demonstrated toward me growing up. Specifically, I'm grateful for my mother's example of a work ethic and my father's constant encouragement for me to be the "best" in whatever I do.

IN MEMORY

Of Sis. Diann Horton, my first sponsor in recovery and genuine best friend, who was diagnosed with lung cancer one month before I started seminary, and went home to be with the Lord at the beginning of my second semester; for her constant encouragement for me to return to school and to earn the highest degree; for her reminding me to always believe in myself and what I can achieve in life; and finally, for my respected friend, in glory, for always telling me, "You're right where you're supposed to be, because if you were to be anywhere else, God would see to it that you were there."

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It is impossible for me to acknowledge all who helped me grow through this project, but I must thank the following:

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination at large and specifically Bishop W. Darin Moore and the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church for the significant role they played in seeing that this project was a success, and for assuring that this minister, me, achieved God's purpose for her life – a purpose that would impact the Church, community, and coming generation in a positive way.

Site Team members, Bishop W. Darin Moore, Deja Jenkins, David Bradley, Dr. Howard Fogel, Darin Kent and Joan Shedlovsky, for sharing their tireless hours of time, wisdom, expertise, encouragement, and support during the range, depth, profundity, intensity, and entire scope of this project.

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CHAPTER 1

THE EGG: INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING

“I write so you may know...the house of God, which is the church of the living God” 1 (Tim 3:15)

“The steps of a good person are ordered by the Lord” (Psalm 37:23)

“I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord” (Jeremiah 29:11)

The story is told that

A man asked God for two things: a plant, which has beautiful and colorful flowers, and a butterfly to add beauty to his small potted garden. However, instead of a flowering plant, God presented him with a cactus plant and a caterpillar. The man was surprised, because he had asked for one thing and God gave him something else. After many days, the cactus bloomed and in the place of the caterpillar, there was a beautiful and stunning butterfly.³

The story of a creation in Genesis is similar to the way a butterfly manifests.

Some theologians prescribe to the school of thought that God created the end before the beginning. Comparable to the creation of the world, the butterfly originates in God's mind as the beautiful creation it will become. However, it is out of chaos (exnihlo) that it finds its humble beginnings. In its journey toward transformation, the butterfly is destined to go through four stages or phases in its lifecycle. In this unique process of metamorphosis, one wonders how God intentionally starts a thing, which is to behold such incredible splendor and encases it in an egg with a hard exterior shell. After the butterfly breaks out of the egg and makes its appearance into God's will for its life (a

³ Maya Pillai, “Butterfly Metamorphosis,” <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/butterfly-metamorphosis.html> (Accessed May 20, 2011).

thing of beauty), it travels to its second phase known as the “larva” (or chrysalis). Essentially, it becomes a caterpillar. In this phase of transition (moving from process to reality), the caterpillar is unattractive, unpleasant and in an uncomfortable stage of becoming. When it sees itself or when others view it they have no comprehension or conceptualization of the beauty that God has ordained. Sequentially, the mysterious and miraculous phase of the butterfly’s actualization is known as transformation. It takes place in phase three.

I am reminded that from the Christian perspective, the number three has tremendous significance. It represents the doctrine of the Trinity. Profoundly “The Father is revealed in Christ through the Spirit.”⁴ In this Trinitarian understanding, “the totality of God’s”⁵ attributes are “enveloped and erupt” into the consciousness of those who follow Christ. It is in this significant and symbolic phase that God steps into the butterfly’s situation of a black bewilderment and bleak brokenness, and transforms the butterfly. It is then divinely ushered it into its intended purpose, which is to bless humanity. As God is doing the molding and shaping, building on the former stages of growth, development and maturity, the butterfly proceeds to the fourth and final stage. Here the actualization of God’s purpose is made manifest in the emergence of the adult butterfly. After the development of the wings, the butterfly is then ready to fly.

The above story is an ideal metaphor of the process by which God has (and is) changing my life. Stating briefly what I mean, while growing up I had a plethora of love from my parents. They introduced me to Jesus as a child when

⁴ Alister E. McGrath, *Theology: The Basics* (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 88.

⁵ Ibid.

the family joined a Baptist church in the community where we lived. I was baptized very young at this church, and can still remember the experience to this day. I attended Sunday school regularly, and this is where my new relationship that I had begun with the Lord was nurtured. Moreover, I did well in school in my formative years when I applied myself. However, in my case that was not often. One of the things I realized as I grew up was that God had gifted me to be very athletically inclined. I loved playing sports and was good at them! I also received the President's Physical Fitness Award in school many times. Once, I even aspired to be a gym teacher. What I am sharing with you, the reader, in brief is that in my own way I really wanted (or was asking for) a life that was synonymous to the one in the above story, a life of a flowering plant and butterfly. However, due to my poor choices of bad behavior, and of becoming an alcoholic and drug abuser I received a horrible and incorrigible life of the cactus and the caterpillar. The process of my change is synonymous to the metamorphosis of the butterfly and can best be described as "***Stages and Phases of Transformation.***" God initiated and orchestrated the restoration of my life to begin taking place in the divine and holy embryo, called Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church.

Reflection upon Church Structure

Informatively, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is the egg (or incubator) where my spiritual life has been developed and nourished. This great church is located in the urban community of Mt. Vernon, New York. Presently, it is erected on the corner of Eighth Avenue and Fourth Street. Directly across the street, in the front of the church, on the Fourth Street side stands *The Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center*, a clinic

that provides individuals with “physical healing.” Picturesquely, also on the Fourth Street side, but positioned diagonally across the street to the right is a low-income housing project called *Levister Towers*, a 497-unit complex,⁶ which has its own playground for tenants. Also surrounding the close proximity of the church, on Eighth and Ninth Avenues, beautiful private homes array the streets with assorted architectural styles. Importantly, *The Greater Centennial Homes*, which is a completed and birthed vision of former pastor Belvie H. Jackson, is located within these blocks. Many members of the congregation live in these buildings. Essentially, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church provides “spiritual healing” that reaches the entire circumference of the community.

Reflection upon Mission/Ministry

Unapologetically, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is a church that demonstrates an abundance of love. Moreover, it should be understood that the church is dedicated to the transformation of individuals and communities. By way of mission and as a body collectively, our church’s thrust of doing ministry is to make disciples. Said another way, our mission is the Great Commission. (Matthew 28:19). Moreover, “Greater Centennial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is a congregation of believers called by God to provide a holistic ministry to our community. We are committed to sharing the message of liberation proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism, fellowship, and the advocating of spiritual, educational, and

⁶ Elsa Brenner, “Paying Low Rent but at an Inflated Risk,” Housing, Mount Vernon, *New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/07/nyregion/westchester/07tenantswe.html> (Accessed October 20, 2011).

economic empowerment of all people.⁷ The church has actualized its mission statement over the years in several substantial ways. In particular, we became involved in school board elections, housing realities, had a congregational protest of Con Edison running a gas pipeline through our community, fought peacefully to keep Mount Vernon Hospital open (which would have been a New York State Hospital injustice if it closed), created Westchester One in Praise (an intentional joining of choirs from different denominations for specific worship events), established small group Bible studies, and our most recent endeavor – the constructing of the Greater Centennial’s Belvie & Shirley Jackson Family Life Center that is designed for personal, professional, spiritual, and physical development of our members and those in the community. Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has also been very active in voter registration, working to assure that as many individuals were registered to vote in the 2012 election. We hoped to have 100% of our membership registered by October 12, 2012 (the cut-off date for voter registration). Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church received a letter from President Barack Obama that was read openly to the congregation at the 9:30 service to thank us for our prayers and support.⁸

Over the years, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, which is primarily African American in its identity, has experienced significant changes in the congregation’s ministry, mission, programs, and spirituality. The terminology that most justifiably fits what has been going on at the church is called congregational transformation.

⁷ Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore (Pastor), interview by author, 13 May 2011, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt Vernon, N.Y.

⁸ Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church Website, www.greatercentennial.org watch online, November 14, 2012.

Basically, “Congregational Transformation has at least three pillars. It must be spiritual, systematic, and sensitive.”⁹ To attain this type of “transformation, it means that every ministry team is engaged in the process.”¹⁰. Transformational efforts such as these can be seen at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church as every ministry works in unison. We, as a church, are committed to working in such a way that our ministry glorifies God and edifies people. The worship team, inclusive of pastor, ministers, and choir members, are responsible for leading the congregation into worship. However, there are many who work behind the scenes to help create an ambience and atmosphere of workshop. They work systemically. Transformation flows outward, impacting both leadership and laity. Most importantly, transformation occurs in God’s time in stages and phases.

We, as a church, are also known for our sensitivity in growing, maturing and developing members in the kingdom of God, which includes providing an ear, education and empowering others. “Sensitive transformation means that the leaders are sensitive to how the pace of change is affecting [everyone’s] lives together”¹¹.

Keeping the above concepts in mind, let us eye (by perusing through the following lenses of writing) the enormous amount of changes in “the egg.” The most noticeable shift over the last 12 years in Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church’s metamorphosis process can be seen in the persistent growth in membership. In a profound way, “membership has doubled, with our congregation receiving 400-plus new

⁹ Pastor Chaney, “Congregational Transformation,” <http://makingdisciples.wordpress.com/2007/10/30/congregational-transformation/> (Accessed October 20, 2012).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

members annually.”¹² There has also been a constant increase in “treasure” from those becoming a part of the church, with many members bringing their “tithe and offerings into the storehouse.” (Mal 3:10 NKJV) In addition, a large percentage of members have committed to help build the Family Life Center by making pledges of sacrificial giving. Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church has also been blessed to see a perpetual rise in “leadership development” through additional ministries. This could not occur without the authentic leadership abilities of Pastor W. Darin Moore. According to Peter G. Northouse, “Authentic leadership is viewed as something that can be nurtured in a leader, rather than a fixed trait.”¹³ This quality in our pastor has resulted in our church currently having over 60 ministries.¹⁴ Thirteen have been established over the last ten years.¹⁵ The ministries listed below are just a few of the most recently developed that targets populations with specific needs. Since my Demonstration Project Proposal (See Appendix A) was submitted, the church is still expanding its focus towards precise populations. David’s Kitchen is a ministry developed by Site Team member Bro. David Bradley to meet Jesus’ mandate to feed the hungry. He and his team serve a scrumptious lunch to the hungry every Monday. Greater Hope and Healing Ministry is a counseling ministry for members who are undergoing grief or any other challenge in their lives. A Greater Way of Life Recovery Ministry is a ministry of which I am the visionary. This vision of this ministry focused foremost on the spiritual growth and development of our

¹² David Bradley (Business Manager), interview by author, 13 May 2011, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

¹³ Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage, 2010. 205-235.

¹⁴ David Bradley, 5/13/11.

¹⁵ Ibid.

members through the word of God. Moreover, in every way, it promoted holy and righteous living. Furthermore, we dedicated ourselves to raising awareness and informing our congregation and community about the many forms of addiction. The ministry also circulated addiction literature at various outreach events and workshops, etc. Moreover, A Greater Way of Life Recovery Ministry took the gospel to the streets, and to those in need as commissioned by our Lord Jesus Christ. (See Appendix B, A Greater Way of Life Recovery Mission Statement) Frankly, “all churches missions [should] include making inroads into its community”¹⁶ I was blessed to be the leader of this ministry for seven years.

The ministries listed above are just a few of the most recently developed that target populations with specific needs. Since my Demonstration Project Proposal was submitted, the church is still expanding its focus towards populations with special needs.

In particular, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church now has a deaf ministry, where “signing” is taught to members of the church. This ministry, which of course is targeted to the hearing impaired, was first initiated at our 12:00 p.m. service. Every aspect of the worship, including Scripture, prayer, affirmation of faith, etc. is conveyed in sign language. Importantly, the church is also beginning a ministry that addresses the healing of persons affected by child molestation. Moreover, the church also held a domestic violence workshop (partnering with My Sister’s Place) to educate both the males and females of our church on the horrors of abuse. Kimberly McNair, Training Coordinator, helped those who sat in on the class to understand that those who

¹⁶James D. D. Berkley, *Leadership Handbook of Management and Administration: Practical Insights from a Cross Section of Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1994), 42.

demonstrate abuse (whether physical, emotional, financial, or technologically seek to intimidate, and control others). Also, members of our church collected a surplus of various items to donate to the women's shelter. Regarding other transformative developments that have occurred in recent years, the ministerial staff at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has grown tremendously, reaching 29. The ministerial team "can be compared to what author Steinke describes as "a living... organism, a network of connection and contact."¹⁷

As a group, the unified goal and effort of the ministers are to serve God, our pastor, and God's people, which include those in the larger church, immediate congregation, and growing community. We are a large group of one hundred percent African American in ethnicity, who have each been blessed with many gifts and talents. Our diversities include gender (inclusive of both male and female), age (which ranges from early thirties to one minister in his mid- seventies) and of course roles. Actually, some of our ministers are more effective with administration and technology, while others are more passionate about other areas of ministry such as counseling, teaching, or evangelizing. With such a large congregation, God is able to use each of us in God's own way. The ministerial system (as a whole but) having "different parts interact and cooperate"¹⁸ striving to reach ministry that demonstrates wholeness. This wholeness is best understood by our ministerial team members having a working together mindset, willing motivation, and witnessing mission, that is demonstrated in synchronization that glorifies God.

¹⁷ Peter L. Steinke, *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach* (Herndon, Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2006), 6.

¹⁸ Ibid.

With such a large number of ministers, the church has been able to be a “ministry supply pool for other churches.” Specifically, ministers are assigned to other A.M.E. Zion churches within our district. Some pastors find this service to be of great assistance, while at the same time, ministers who have recently come on board the ministerial team benefit by being trained by the more experienced pastors, in the field.

Also important to note, Greater Centennial A. M.E. Zion Church has shifted concurrently with society’s “new cultural language.”¹⁹ In other words, the church is presently in sync with the current information age and taking full advantage of and exercising a greater use of technology. Actually, there are “Four ways to understand Media in Ministry. Those ways are called, Media as the arts, Media as information, Media as mission or evangelism and Media as cultural language.”²⁰ You, the reader, should know that the Media Ministry at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church meets not just the needs of the local church, but the team also travels with the church when larger worship services are held at other churches or venues and also when evangelistic outreach events are done in the community.

Staying with the media for a moment more, much different from years past, our services can be seen on “live stream” via the Internet. Vividly, ministers gifted in technology minister during the services by “chatting” with those who are viewing. To a significant degree, these unique digitalized services allow sermon notes to be displayed on the screen in the sanctuary, while simultaneously, The Word of God (Jesus) is being preached on Sundays and during Bible study. Moreover, the pastor also has a monthly

¹⁹ Len Wilson, *The Wired Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1999), 31.

²⁰ Ibid., 23.

Blog page, “to discuss pertinent Greater Centennial topics, current events, and answer questions.”²¹ In this way, persons get to have their questions answered personally by the pastor. Also as a way to keep individuals in the loop digitally, all church events are announced via our web page²². Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church also has its own Facebook page as well as a Twitter handle. With these media/ministry tools many individuals (and churches from within our denomination all over the world) are able to communicate with each other. In the church’s effort to do things in a more excellent way, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church also upgraded the quality of its sound equipment, which enhanced the quality of worship tremendously. The individual and collective tones from each of the seven choirs²³ now effectively ring out and reach the epitome of a crescendo in the hearts of the hearers; this is also true of the preached word.

Also important to note, is the increase and impact that the Dance Ministry has had on the worship services over the recent years. There is always supreme synchronicity within the team’s spiritual steps, which mixes significantly with the worshipful theme of the day. The Holy Spirit has a way of touching members in the congregation through this ministry. The creative outfits the Dance Ministry wears set them apart as distinct worshippers. The entire “worship experience” at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has been the “yoke of the egg,” which God has used to nurture my spiritual development. Significantly, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has also transformed and matured greatly over the years in the area of economic development. Note, “The

²¹ Greater Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church, “Church Bulletin,” Pastor statement of “Come join me every month on ‘Pastors Blog,’” May 25, 2011.

²² Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church Website, <http://www.greatercentennial.org>.

²³ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church Website, “Ministries” (Praise and Worship), <http://www.greatercentennial.org> (Accessed May 14, 2011).

church is leading the community by investing or sponsoring over \$26 million in housing development.”²⁴ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has provided 16 two-family homes known as the James Varick Homes. The church has also successfully completed the renovation of the current Greater Centennial Homes, which is a 157-unit housing project, and is currently revitalizing 26 apartments (named Varick Court in honor of Zion’s first bishop, James Varick,) which are intended for middle-income families.

Regarding the increase of the spirituality of our members, I have the following thoughts. Unquestionably, over the years, there have been many programs and many openings for leadership within our church, which certainly can be acknowledged as contributing to members’ spiritual growth. Significantly, I also hold as a reason for the enormous spiritual growth of many persons in the congregation – the persistent passionate preaching and teaching of Pastor W. Darin Moore. As the under-shepherd, of the church, he fully realizes that the congregation must be in perpetual growth. Therefore, over the years he has seen to it that when he is serving the kingdom of God in other capacities, and unable to attend morning worship service, that the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church pulpit is graced with many anointed preachers to preach the gospel. In the same way, many gifted teachers have come and taught Bible Study at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, at Pastor Moore’s request.

One must admit that opportunities such as what have been just stated are not the only basis for charting spiritual growth. I strongly believe that prayer is the persistent pulse, the steady activity that regulates the heart, mind, body, and spiritual will of the church. While I believe that Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church is the greatest

²⁴ Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore, Pastor, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Sunday Morning Service, May 15, 2011.

church, I synonymously believe that the spiritual growth of its members and the church as a collective body can improve immensely by the church becoming stronger in the area of corporate prayer. It has been indicated that “No ministry can succeed [spiritually] without much praying.”²⁵ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has 5,556 members²⁶, and only about 10 to 15 members who come to prayer meetings regularly. This number on average has not changed since I submitted my Demonstration Project Proposal. At present, prayer is emphasized from the pulpit on Sunday mornings, during both the men’s and women’s morning-prayer lines for 15 minutes, and administratively during the Lenten season. I should also indicate that during every August (the month that the church takes its spiritual Sabbath, in place of Bible Study, which is normally taught on Tuesday evenings), the church is open for individuals to come and pray. Realistically, there is a plethora that the church is attempting to do in building up the kingdom of God.

Considering the large amount of members that we have and the multitude of issues that members deal with, a church of our size would benefit greatly by emphasizing prayer even more. I feel that if all the ministries had a stronger element of prayer attached to them, the spirituality of the members and the church itself would increase. It is one thing if the world has an attitude about not praying. However, I’m inclined to ask, “What does God say when the church (God’s church) does not increase its measures to put prayer as a high priority?” Jesus Himself, said, “It is written in the Scriptures, My House *is* the House of prayer.” (Luke19:46 KJV) The Church cannot continue feeding itself from the business of doing ministry, without being intentional about moving to its next spiritual

²⁵ E. M. Bounds, *Power through Prayer* (New Kensington, Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 1982), 41.

²⁶ David Bradley (Business Manager), interview by author, 16 May 2011, Greater A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

phase. Instead, we as a church must outgrow and molt²⁷ our skin as the caterpillar does.

We must collectively creep closer (and higher) to God. In preparation for all that God has for Christians to do, and all that we will face on our journey, it is imperative, our spiritual obligation to become stronger prayer warriors.

Since I submitted my Demonstration Project Proposal, I must share with you the reader, that the church made a few significant strides in becoming stronger in the discipleship building area of prayer. As one of the Assistant Ministers of Discipleship at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, I was not only concerned, but also felt a sense of commitment and compassion (determination and duty) to help to strengthen the Prayer Ministry. On October 31, 2011, I let God use me to create Prayer Palm cards. After getting approval from the Prayer Leader, Mother Lorraine David, the design was sent for final approval from church administration. In particular, these Palm cards would be great ministry tools for evangelism, helping our ministry to move beyond the altar and inspire souls in the community to come to prayer on Saturday evenings and Wednesday mornings. Another effort I endeavored in (on behalf of the Lord) for prayer at our church was the designing of tee-shirts and sweatshirts. Once again, the Lord gave me the vision of what they should look like. The church logo is displayed on the front of a white tee-shirt in red ink. In red letters are the words “Greater Prayer Warriors.” On the back of the shirt are the words, “Praying to Reach our Destiny, Expect the Great,” and the Scripture “And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony.” (Rev. 12:11NKJV) I discussed everything with Mother Lorraine David (leader), and the same protocol was needed for gaining approval of tee-shirts as was for

²⁷ Maya Pillai, 5/20/11.

the Palm cards. Informatively, the church did not purchase the shirts for us. However, over 20 people ordered and paid \$10.00 for their shirts. A key intention that I had for the shirts, in the ministry, was for us to wear them as a sign of unity when we came to prayer. The entire spiritual direction of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, inclusive of children, youth, and adults, can be affected in a positive way through prayer initiatives such as this, and the outcome be seen as spiritual increase.

Once again, the significant factors that have shaped the ministry, mission, and spirituality of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church can be attributed to “the dynamic leadership of our gifted pastor/preacher, The Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore. In particular, he has had a willingness to decentralize authority and distribute it, creating an atmosphere for more leadership from laity – along with a willingness to share it with other churches.”²⁸

Regarding any specific conflict, as Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church (the egg) has increased in shape and size over recent years, I write the following. Our church shifted from Bible Institute classes, which focused on spiritual discipleship issues (i.e., prayer, prophets, Bible 101, women in the Bible, etc.) to a weekly G.L.A.D. (Growing, Learning, Anointed, Disciples) class, which is considered small group Bible studies. These classes were seen as a threat to the Bible Institute, which subsequently is no longer an option for the members. Many individuals wanted to take these focused classes, but could not because the vision of the pastor was shifting. G.L.A.D. classes also intimidated

²⁸ David Bradley, 5/16/11.

and ran away the class leader system, which ran counter to the G.L.A.D. classes (in other ways).

One example of a difference in the ministry objective of former class meetings was that they were held by class leaders, throughout the year, whenever they could get their members together. Another thing, on a specified night (Tuesday), members would gather before Bible study, where hymns were sung, Scripture read, prayers made, and testimonies given from those who attended. Often, however, there were not many individuals in attendance. Therefore, G.L.A.D was instituted. Since submitting my Demonstration Project Proposal, the class leader system has returned as an original ministry focus within Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. The G.L.A. D. lesson, a dynamic Sunday school lesson that allows the entire church to be on one accord is distributed to all the members of the church weekly. Moreover, it is offered just about every day of the week so that people can get in where they fit in continues to be taught. However, the ministry focus is now clearly defined as small class groups. The small groups are intentionally designed with principals of worship, discipleship, evangelism, service, stewardship, and fellowship built into the class. A member of the steward board, who is cluster leader (a person who leads a group of class leaders) is responsible for overseeing the group. Inclusively, authority is given to the individual who teaches the word of God (the discipleship person) in the small group based on their giftedness and ability to search through and teach the biblical text.

Informatively, a primary principal that was birthed from the father of Methodism, John Wesley, is the class leader system. “Early Methodists (from the mid 1740’s) were divided into small groups that met weekly to hold each other accountable for their

discipleship. The class leader [is] an important office in the Methodist practice of accountability.”²⁹

In addition, there are a few other things one should know based on studies that have been done in the United States about small groups.

They have a dynamic of their own. Basically, ‘When [individuals] who do not know one another form a new group and undertake a task they routinely establish a hierarchy of roles... The group informally selects and authorizes one of its own members to chair the group in place of the person designated... hence formal and informal authority roles do not... overlap... The group looks to its chairperson for certain services.’³⁰

In particular, small groups are designed and known to work in church settings.

Growth of the members and glorifying God is always the optimum goal.

Not necessarily a specific conflict, but clearly one of the challenges around ministry that Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church has experienced over the years is moving from one to three services. The church went from having one service at 11:00 a.m. to holding three services (7:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 12 p.m.) all at which our pastor primarily preaches. This decision to move to more services was due to logistics and membership increase.

Admittedly, our church falls short in some areas, which can be viewed by some as conflicting issues contrary to their own perspective. For example, the church currently accommodates persons in wheelchairs that need assistance entering the church. However, it is our sincere intention to create viable access for the handicapped via a ramp. Included in the blueprints of our new edifice, the Family Life Center (which will

²⁹ Ted Campbell, *The Essentials of Methodist Doctrine* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1999), 126.

³⁰ Ibid., 56.

have a *Sanctinasium*, a state of the art, combined worship area and gym) has accessibility for the handicapped.

As stated earlier, we as a church continue to “grow void [in a conflicting and contrary way of Jesus’ mandate] of intentional teaching and practice of corporate and personal prayer.”³¹ I must add, though, that prayer initiatives have increased. However, for where God wants to take the church more prayer is needed. In the future, I am interested in teaching another Prayer class at the church, which stimulated positive results. (See Appendix C, Prayer Class Evaluation)

Moving on, regarding thoughts on further expansion of “the egg,” I would like to see Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church and the new Family Life Center become a refuge and restoration place for those with past and present addictions. I want the church to be intentional about providing essential needs that cover spirituality, education, and the overall holistic needs that equate to the “total transformation” of the recovering population. The current Recovery Ministry does not receive adequate support from the church and congregation. Members in this population (many who are in our congregation) can be better served if there is proper preparation for them by way of programs, provision of resources, and persons who have passion to love, be patient with, and teach them. It is also essential that the church, inclusive of its leadership at all levels be able to *understand* individuals who are in their process of being delivered from drug addiction – at whatever stage or phase. My hope is that the outcome of this dissertation will provide that kind of information for clergy.

³¹ David Bradley, 5/16/11.

As the egg (the church) continues to grow, I also envision a re-entry program for prisoners at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. Considering that “drug offenders sent to prison are more than twice as likely to be rearrested within a year of release, with more than half those arrests being drug related”³² a re-entry program and strong recovery program housed in the same proximity can have excellent results for church, congregation, and ex-offender.

Informatively, President Obama understands addiction to be a disease. An article in the *Westchester County Press* reports, “The Office of National Drug Council Policy hosted a media briefing on Nov. 20, [2011] to highlight the Obama Administration unprecedented approach to addressing addiction. Ben Tucker, Deputy Director for State, Local, and Tribal Affairs set the tone by giving stats about how costly criminalizing drug use has been.”³³ By Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church providing re-entry services (via the new Family Life Center) it would also greatly enhance the current. “Another Chance Prison Ministry” work that is done by our church, in which I am involved. The reason that the church does not currently have a re-entry program is because the primary efforts over the last few years have been going towards erecting the Family Life Center. However, such a program is in consideration for the future.

Reflection upon Theological Commitment

Most importantly, the theological commitments of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church can be understood by “the centrality of Jesus Christ as Savior and as living

³² Sally L. Satel and David J. Fararbee, “The Role of Coercion in Drug Treatment” in *Substance Abuse: A Comprehensive Textbook*, ed. Joyce H. Lowinson, M.D., Pedro Ruiz, M.D., Robert B. McMillan, M.D., John G. Langrod, A.C.S.W., C.A.S.A.C., L.C.S.W., PhD. (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005), 700.

³³ Valencia Mohammed, “Obama Drug Addiction is a Disease, Not a Crime,” *Westchester County Press*, Vol. LXXXII No. 48, December 1, 2011.

God.”³⁴ In addition, the A.M.E. Denomination as a whole believes in the Holy Trinity.³⁵ In essence, the cultural and social commitments of our congregation can be summed up as follows: “We are a congregation that believes in the gospel of liberation that results in all people being valued and enabled to reach their God.”³⁶ What we believe in and stand for is a means of empowerment. The primary Scripture that supports our action as a church is Luke 4:18.

Reflection upon Spirituality

The physical objects that best symbolize the ministry, mission, and spirituality are as follows. First and foremost, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church itself (the egg) is the first symbol one sees. When members come to experience God in their daily lives at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, their spirituality can be metaphorically compared to that of “a seed” that is being intentionally planted by God. Some individuals, more than others, can be described as *souls* that establish divine roots and who instinctively and persistently grow.

The growth of the seed/soul begins from the time an individual visits “the egg” (church) and is met by our STAND Ministry, which regulates the parking and traffic in between services to create a sincere ambiance of welcome for our guests who are potential seeds. Progressively, seeds/souls are then greeted by our “Hospitality Ministry,” which serves faithfully every Sunday whether there is a multitudinous down pouring of rain, innumerable amounts of snowflakes, or unbearable rays of the sun. As I

³⁴ Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore (Pastor), interview by author, 13 May 2011, Greater A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

³⁵ African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, *The Book of Discipline*, (Charlotte, North Carolina: A.M.E. Zion Publishing House, 2008), 12.

³⁶ Rev. Moore, 5/13/2011.

learned in Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall's Leadership Class, when individuals enter a building or organization, there are three things that they see: "artifacts" (physical landscaping), "espoused values" (timeless guiding principles), and "basic underlying assumptions" (the history of a value system that is rooted deep in the tradition of the church). The ministries mentioned above are symbolic in representing our church. In a more perceptible way, upon entering Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, individuals view "the cross," which symbolizes where Jesus died for salvation, the "centered pulpit" indicating that preaching is central to worship, "two candles" one for Jesus' humanity and the other for His divinity; when they are lit, the church is in worship, and the "stained glass windows" where Jesus is portrayed behind the pulpit pictorially as "a Man of color," One who is historically recorded as being from Nazareth. (Matt. 13:54) All these symbols introduce a stranger once inside to the type of congregation we are.

Additionally, our church is identified by our dynamic aforementioned Music Ministry as well as the several housing structures that have been obtained near the church for meeting spaces and administrative purposes.

Moving on, souls/seeds are seated by our faithful ushers; this seating is a vital process of God's transformational work. The symbolic soil of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is truly rich and is fully nourished by the Holy Spirit. Once God decides that a seed/soul should be planted in our "egg" congregation, the Barnabas Ministry (responsible for ministering to new converts) begins the process of spiritual instruction and gives probationary members significant inspiration by way of encouragement. This spiritual backing by the Barnabas Ministry continues until one is given the Right Hand of Fellowship and becomes a full member in connection (after taking seven new member

classes). In a helpful way, class leaders and ministries within the church extend love to these individuals in their process of becoming officially a part of “the egg”. It is rather difficult for a new seed not to be drawn into “the egg” since God is doing the planting. Purposely, God uses the entire worship experience from the preached word of the pastor, ministerial staff, singing of the choir, welcoming of guests, etc., to begin the drawing and planting process.

Reflection upon Programs

Significantly, the one program that presently best represents the ministry of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is the small group classes, where G.L.A.D. is taught. This ministry has been written about briefly above in relation to conflict in ministry settings. However, to expound upon it further many outreach events and efforts have been undertaken by the small groups. In particular, our group visited a secular drug treatment facility, collected monies for a leper colony in Africa, and visited a Veterans hospital. (See Appendix D, Letter from Ms. Bryant)

Interestingly, the program that demonstrates the weaker side of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church continues to be the aforementioned Prayer Ministry.

Reflection upon History

By way of longer history and heritage (including historical ascent) of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church the following must be noted.

According to the information that has been passed down through the years, in 1896 a small group of people met in the home of Mrs. Anna Green, who lived on the corner of Eleventh Avenue and Eastchester Lane, for the purposes of organizing a Colored Methodist Church in Mt. Vernon, New York, thus marking the founding of the first A.M. E. Zion Church in [Mt.

Vernon]...The first meeting place as a church was in a frame building on the corner of South Ninth Avenue and West Third Street.³⁷

Regarding the persons of past godly guidance, the following pastors have been responsible for the leadership of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church over the years:

The Rev. W. H. Ely was the first pastor in 1896. Subsequently, in order the pastors were The Rev. C.H. Williams (1899-1900), The Rev. George Frances Green (1900-1901), The Rev. Emory Thomas (1901-1903). ('During this time the church was moved from Ninth Avenue to larger quarters on Third Street.'). The Rev. R.A. Lyle (1903-1907). ('Under his leadership membership grew to the extent that they wanted to build larger and better quarters; this they did by purchasing the property at 253 So. Eighth Avenue, and there a new building was erected.'). The Rev. N.E. Ray (1907-1908), The Rev. N.E. Collins (1908-1912), 'The Rev. Johnson was the next pastor (1912-1913), at which time the church was given the name Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church.' In succession after him the names of those who held pastorates were The Rev. Samuel S. Boyd (1913-1924), The Rev. F.W. Riley (1924-1926), The Rev. James R. White (1929-1933), The Rev. J.H. Tucker (1933-1934), The Rev. Blunt (1934-1935), The Rev. Polk K. Fonvielle (1935-1946), The Rev. Clinton Wilcox Sr. (1946-1967), and The Rev. Belvie H. Jackson (1968-1993).³⁸

In 1993, a "historic event occurred at the New York Annual Conference, as The Reverend W. Darin Moore, one of Rev. Jackson's sons in the ministry, was transferred from Jones Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church, in Indianapolis, Indiana. He was appointed by Bishop Walker to return to Mt. Vernon and pastor his home church."³⁹ Pastor Moore has served in this position uninterrupted since this time, and was appointed back to the church as pastor by Bishop George E. Battle on Sunday, June 26, 2011. Pastors and ministers are appointed to serve for only one year at a time. Pastor Moore offered himself for the position of bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church at the General Conference

³⁷ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church 100th Anniversary: Remembering the Past, Serving the Present, Envisioning the Future (Port Washington, New York: Commemorative Publications, 1996), 10.

³⁸ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church 100th Anniversary, 10.

³⁹ Ibid., 12.

in June 2012. Bishop Roy H. Holmes appointed Stephen W. Pogue as the new pastor of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church on September 29, 2012.

Reflection upon Tradition

Importantly,

The first church organized in 1796 and built in 1800 was called Zion. The founders chose this name because, ‘it was the name most frequently used in the Bible to designate the church of God.’...Among the leaders of the movement was James Varick, who was the first Bishop and to whom is attributed the founding father of the Zion Church. Zion Church was incorporated in 1801 by the name ‘The African Methodist Episcopal Church in New York.’ Methodist Episcopal was always in the title to exhibit the retention of the doctrine and form of church government under which the denomination was originated. ‘African’ was prefixed to the rest of the title of this church because it was to be controlled by the descendants of Africa, in the interest of humanity, regardless of race, color, sex, or condition...Because another denomination came into existence with the same title, and so much confusion was brought about, the General Conference in 1848 voted to make Zion a part of a denominational name, henceforth, to be known as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. From the very outset, the Zion Church has been in the forefront in the battle for full citizenship and freedom in this country. The A.M.E. Zion Church encompasses all of the United States, Canada, Caribbean Islands, England, Africa, India and South America, and it is under the supervision of twelve (12) elected bishops.⁴⁰

Also important to the A.M.E. Zion Church/Denomination,

For the extending of missionary work in foreign countries the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church directs that there shall be an Oversees Missionary Department. In particular, the Women’s Home & Oversees Missionary Department’s purpose includes the following, to: ‘Promote growth in the knowledge and understanding of God and His plan of redemption for the world, as revealed through Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit,’ ‘teach the concepts of Christian missions and provide experience for participation in mission work and its ministries,’ ‘exemplify the principals of Christian living and to win others to Christ,’ ‘promote the cause of World evangelism,’ and to ‘serve as a financial support system to undergird the world mission outreach of the

⁴⁰ Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church, *New Members Guide*, “Abbreviated History of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church” (Mt. Vernon, N.Y.: Instructors’ Manual for Teaching New Members, September 2008), 8.

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, at home and overseas, to the end that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is exalted and God is glorified.⁴¹

I would be remiss if I did not mention the long legacy, history and tradition of the Christian Education Department. “The General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church directs that there shall be a Christian Education Department for the promotion and supervision of the Christian training and development of the entire membership of the denomination.”⁴²

The Church in all that it is, is the Bride of Christ. Pushing further, Zion’s mother is Female (Mother A.M.E. Zion Church). You, the reader, should know that she has] “laid a lot of eggs [churches around the world]...and many of them have survived.”⁴³

In closing, the historicity and cultural heritage of Zion is richer and much more extensive in many ways. However, the above thorough *egg-ology* paints quite an adequate picture for you, the reader. I do not wish to close, however, without stating firmly that Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion denomination have been the ordained divine “egg” used by God in the process of my spiritual transformation. I write this because, when I thought I was big and bad enough to do everything I wanted to do in life, I left Grace Baptist Church as a young teenager. I left the church to explore the world for myself. In essence, I escaped the spiritual teachings I was being taught, but found out that God would never leave me. It would be a multitude of years that my expedition of faith would begin anew. This

⁴¹ *The Book of Discipline*, 228.

⁴² Ibid., 192.

⁴³ Drexel University, 10/11/12.

happened when God ordered my steps and directed my path to Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church.

My ancestral historicity provides me with a profound pictorial of memories showing that, my great-grandfather was a former preacher steward of the church. My great-grandmother was a deaconess and evangelist. My grandmother (their daughter) was a 70- year member, and my father (my grandmother's son) was a member of the church as a child growing up. I am very proud to be a fourth generation A.M.E. Zionite, who has been nurtured at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, a holy "egg." This church is my ordained place of "change." Understandably, all "eggs" (churches) have a purpose in life. In a logical and sagacious way, as "the egg" grows into its next stage or phase there are obvious challenges in the world that it must address on, God's behalf.

CHAPTER 2

THE CATEPILLAR: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGE

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways says the Lord...So are my ways higher than your ways, And my thoughts than your thoughts”
(Isaiah 55:8, 9)

“And we know that all things work together for the good of those who love God”
(Romans 8:28)

In discussing the second phase of transformation, the caterpillar in this phase eats and grows tremendously.⁴⁴ Indeed, “after hatching from the egg stage, the young caterpillar spends most of its time eating leaves and gaining weight. The caterpillar undergoes several molts of its skin until it becomes full-grown, and has accumulated enough body mass to carry it through the entire life cycle.” The caterpillar is an apt metaphor that describes my personal story as well as reveals the challenges that compelled me to do this – God’s project.

Exploration of the Challenge

As an Associate Minister of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, in Mt. Vernon, N.Y., and a thirty-five-year substance abuse survivor, the following statistics alarm me. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 68,000 residents in Mt. Vernon. Less than 2% have sought professional treatment for addiction⁴⁵ residents in Mt. Vernon, less

⁴⁴ Enchanted Living, “Butterfly Life Cycle – Metamorphosis of Monarch Butterfly,” <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/butterfly/activities/printouts/lifecycle.shtml> (Accessed June 1, 2011).

⁴⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, 10/19/11.

than 2% have sought professional treatment for addictions.⁴⁶ Less than 1% of those in treatment seek it from a church program. Of the city's five largest churches, there is only one Recovery Ministry providing holistic treatment. If this problem is not addressed, those with past and present addictions will never look to the Church as viable means of recovery. This Demonstration Project will design a transformational Recovery Ministry at Greater Centennial with the intent to duplicate the design in other churches.

The main reason that the subject of addiction is significant to me is because it is a very personal issue by way of experience. Clearly, I remember from a personal perspective being in the caterpillar phase. God, Himself, interrupted my life, after using drugs and alcohol sequentially for 35 years with few breaks. He spared me the pain, misery, and suffering of persistent substance abuse. The drugs I abused are alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, THC, heroin, crack, and methadone. I must add that I tried other illicit street drugs, but the ones listed were my drugs of choice. "Substance abuse occurs when an individual uses a drug without a legitimate medical need to do so. In the case of alcohol, the person is drinking in excess of accepted standards..."⁴⁷

Informatively, "according to 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA), an estimated 16.6 Americans age 12 years and older were classified with dependence or abuse of either alcohol or illicit drugs (7.3% of the total population). The rate among African Americans was 7.4% compared to 7.2% for whites and Hispanics

⁴⁶ Gary Dollard, 5/15/11.

⁴⁷ Harold E. Doweiko, *Concepts of Chemical Dependency* (Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1990), 11.

6.4%.”⁴⁸ The life I used to live put me in the statistic with African Americans. Clearly, “[Alcoholism and] Drug abuse are... stigmatized within society.”⁴⁹

Moreover,

Prior to the American Medical Association’s decision to classify alcoholism as a formal disease in 1956, the condition was viewed as a moral disorder. Alcoholics [particularly] were considered immoral individuals both by society in general and by the majority of physicians...Jellnick (1952, 1960) and a small number of other physicians argued that alcoholism was a disease, like cancer, or pneumonia.⁵⁰

For 14 years now, God has delivered me from drug and alcohol abuse. He also disrupted the dysfunctional lifestyle that I once lived, which fit comfortably with my pattern of using. The story is quite compelling of how my worldly life of suffering both started and ended.

As early as I can remember most of my parents’ friends and extended family members drank alcohol socially. Drinking alcohol was the “thing” to do in the era in which they lived. I was born in Harlem in 1956 and my parents often frequented clubs like, the “Cotton Club” and the “Baby Grand.” My family moved to Westchester when I was two years old. Needless to say, the alcohol and the party life moved to the “burbs” with us. It is very sad but true to state the fact that I had my first drink at the age of five. Even though it was an innocent sip of beer, it spiraled into many years of [alcohol] “addiction.” I also remember if I had a cold, I was given orange juice and a little brandy as a remedy. If I had a toothache, a little brandy was put on my gums. [I remember

⁴⁸ 4 Charles Madray et. al., “African Americans: Epidemiology Prevention, and Treatment Issues” in *Substance Abuse: A Comprehensive Textbook*, ed. Joyce H. Lowinson, M.D., Pedro Ruiz, M.D., Robert B. Millman, M.D., John G. Langrod, A.C.S.W., C.A.S.A.C., L.C.S.W., PhD. (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005),1093.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 1094.

⁵⁰ Doweiko, 21.

getting in trouble in kindergarten for going to school and telling for “show and tell” that I had beer. I stopped for a couple of years. However as I got older, I would periodically sneak alcohol when cleaning up from my parents’ parties. There was actually a makeshift “bar” set up in our basement for when my parents entertained their friends. Consequently, I continued imitating their behavior for years without thinking much about it. The progression of my disease took me from alcohol, to nicotine, to marijuana, to heroin, to crack, to methadone. I used and abused these illegal substances in combination with each other a daily, monthly, and yearly basis.

On January 14, 1999, I was blessed to go into my last seven-day detox and afterwards a 28-day rehab. Both of these methods of treatment are vital to help a person begin his/her recovery process, especially when one has lived a multitude of his/her life using drugs.

Informatively,

Various treatments for both alcohol and drug abuse have been available since the turn of the century. However, only in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s did both alcohol and drug abuse treatment become major parts of the public health system in the United States. Much about what we know about treatment and current clinical approaches to treatment was developed during these years.⁵¹

For many years, I attended treatment programs. However, I went for the wrong reasons, until one day God said enough! Prior to that, I used drugs to live, and lived to use drugs. Painting a picture of my life during that time for you, the reader, I would share that I was disconnected spiritually from God, academically challenged, occasionally homeless, incarcerated twice, and emotionally bankrupt. I also had several

⁵¹ Robert Hubbard, “Evaluation and Outcome of Treatment” in *Substance Abuse: A Comprehensive Textbook*, ed. Joyce H. Lowinson, M.D., Pedro Ruiz, M.D., Robert B. Millman, M.D., John G. Langrod, A.C.S.W., C.A.S.A.C., L.C.S.W., PhD. (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005) 706.

other challenges that were associated with addiction and that are present when an individual's life is full of despair. Unexpectedly to me (but not to God) while in the rehab, which was at New York Hospital, located in White Plains, New York I had a spiritual awakening. In describing how it happened, a female facilitator told those of us who were in the program that, due to the rapid recidivism rate of substance abusers and the reality of relapse, only two of us would make it in successful recovery.

Astonishingly, I heard the voice of God telling me that I would be one of the two. Ever since that day, the day I heard God's voice speak to me. I felt a mighty change come over my spirit. I can attest for myself that, "The voice of the Lord is powerful" (Psalm 29:4. (NKJV) Therefore, I began going to the church services at the rehab, along with the in-house recovery meetings. Something was happening to me that I could not describe.

After completing the rehab in 28 days, I returned home and started attending an outpatient program. I was (re) introduced to Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church at the recommendation and invitation of a friend. Once inside the building, I remembered attending the church with my great-grandmother and grandmother occasionally when I was younger. This time, however, when I arrived through the church doors, I was on 130 milligrams of methadone, nodding in the back of the church from its inebriating effects. Inserting parenthetically, methadone is a medication that is prescribed and often stigmatized. It "was first shown to cover for and block the effects of heroin withdrawal in 1948. In 1965 it was introduced as substitution treatment for opioid dependency."⁵²

⁵² Robert M. Julien, *A Primer of Drug Action: A Comprehensive Guide to the Actions, Uses, and Side Effects of Psychoactive Drugs* (New York: Worth Publishers, 2005), 484.

Even in the condition I was in (due to the high dosage I was on) when I came to the church, the Holy Spirit, being God Himself, was able to reach in and touch my spirit.

My conversion to Christ occurred, by me attending church regularly, hearing the powerful preached word of Pastor W. Darin Moore (now Bishop), and, most importantly by “surrendering my will” to God’s will. On March 19, 1999 (God’s appointed time), I got up from the pew, walked down the aisle, and gave my life to Christ at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. I and quite a few other individuals were led to a room by ministers. Once in the room, the group of us were led in the “Sinners Prayer” (Romans 10:9 NKJV) by one of the ministers. We (I) confessed with our mouths that Jesus is Lord (God). We confessed with our mouths that we (I) were sinners, we (I) repented (to the Lord) with our mouths for our sins, and (I) asked the Lord to come into our hearts (the place of belief) and fill us (me) with His precious Holy Spirit. When the prayer was over, I was confident (by faith) that I had received salvation (eternal life). I also joined the church that day. At this time, according to the A.M.E. Zion Church, I was a probationary member. It was then necessary for me to take new members classes to become a member in full connection. Significantly, “No member, old or new, can be... loyal members when [persons are] ignorant of what is expected of [them] in their new role. [Persons] must be taught the why of church membership. [Persons] must be taught that the body to which [persons] has now connected [themselves] is the Body of Christ, and [persons] cannot know this unless someone teaches [them] ”⁵³ With this in mind, after taking new members’ classes, I received my Right Hand of Fellowship on December 12, 1999. Important for you, the reader, to know is that giving my life to

⁵³ John H. Miller Sr., *The Right Hand of Fellowship: A Manual on Church Membership and Responsibility with Rituals* (Elgin, North Carolina: Unknown Binding, 1963), 1.

Christ is the most significant thing that I have ever done in my life. Furthermore, I am confident, that there will be nothing else that will happen to me in life that will top, my gaining eternal life. Additionally, I am especially grateful to God for planting me at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church where He ordained me to flourish and freely give back to others. The Bible states, “For the steps of a good [person] are ordered by the Lord” Psalm 37:23. (NKJV)

After my conversion to Christ, I found that my recovery from substance abuse was *really* growing and developing more from my relationship with Jesus, along with the spiritual aspect of the Recovery Ministry’s approach. The cravings to use drugs were diminishing with me being able to call on the name of the Jesus! This is not to take anything away from the Twelve Step fellowship programs, which I found to be quite effective in my life, during the long season in which I participated in them. God used these “Twelve Step programs” to teach me how to live clean and sober. These meetings were a significant part of my recovery. God used them in my life for what they are purposed to be “a bridge back to life.” I am ever grateful for having attended these life-saving groups. However, I give full credit to Jesus Christ for my spiritual transformation, especially since several aspects of my transformation have transpired through the Word of God and the Church.

A miraculous example of spiritual transformation took place, as you, the reader, will remember when [Jesus] “went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons.” (Luke 8:3 NKJV) One can witness profoundly, when

peering through the pages of the biblical text how “Mary Magdalene a woman possessed by seven demons was restored to her right mind, her bondage [became] a thing of the past”⁵⁴ Since [she came in contact with Jesus] everyone in Magdala had marveled at the change in her [life].”⁵⁵

In addition, “Mary Magdalene a person who had been afflicted by demons whose testimony would not have held up in court because she was a woman, was [chosen to be] the first witness of the Resurrection. Once again, God [gives a lesson to those who oppress, showing that He] reveals Himself to the lowly, and it would be the humble whose hearing was sharp enough to perceive the message of His love.”⁵⁶ [Mary] “is a beautiful example of a woman whose life was poured out in response to Gods extravagant grace.”⁵⁷ She is one woman in Scripture who had the privilege (and was free) to follow close with Jesus, doing ministry. I consider myself, in several ways, to be a post-modern day, African American, Mary Magdalene a chosen and appointed, women of God, a servant of the Lord one who understands fully the transformative experience of what happens after encountering the Man named Jesus of Nazareth and what it means to be changed by that Man.

With this in mind, let me share that Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is a church (an egg) dedicated to the transformation of individuals and communities. I am the embodiment of the church’s transformational goal. I write this because of the progressive

⁵⁴ Ann Spangler, *Women in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002), 222.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 222.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 224.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 221.

(the sequential spiritual and academic) stages and phases that God has taken me through.

In many ways, I have went through both a spiritual and scholarly “sanctification process.” The process has helped to transform me into being the servant that God wants me to be. Particularly, “Sanctification is the process of growth [especially] in holiness.”⁵⁸

While undergoing this divine process, I remain being a member of the recovering community, who has felt Greater Centennial’s intentional concern for people in this population. Sadly, Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church is the only church located in Mt. Vernon that has a Recovery Ministry.

I have in mind the following thoughts regarding this challenge. Obviously, the lack of Recovery Ministries being in a significant number of churches in the Mt. Vernon community can be metaphorically compared to that of a caterpillar-like phase (or stage) in the spiritual transformative process of persons in recovery. Caterpillars are not nice looking. This challenge is not appealing for individuals to accept. We as clergy in the community can progress to the next stage if “houses of worship” (inclusive of their leadership) collectively agree to come together (at least) in some sort of spiritual and academic concept, by pushing the envelope further and providing the recovering population with innovative options to take place in church based settings. This collaborative effort has a great potential of impacting the community of Mt. Vernon in a positive way. Significantly, achieving this effort can also touch the hearts of persons in recovery (many who feel overlooked by the church) compelling them to return to (God’s House, the Houses of Worship) where transformation is truly known to take place.

⁵⁸ Ted Campbell, 136.

Moreover, from my social location of being ordained clergy in the church and a leader in the community of Mt. Vernon, I fully recognize that drug and alcohol addiction remains being a significant problem that plagues urban communities. Knowing this, I am also aware (based on both my experiential and learned knowledge) that, “Spirituality is an important element of recovery. Although not necessarily religion, spirituality provides the ethical superstructure, community, and transpersonal presence...to facilitate recovery and aid in the prevention of addiction.”⁵⁹ Also important for one to note is that, [the Church] “has played a crucial role in African American survival and well-being since the trans-Atlantic slave trade. [Specifically] the African American church continues to occupy a unique and critical role within African American culture and U.S. society. The importance of the African American church in African American life has hardly diminished.”⁶⁰

As one who understands this, on March 31, 2011, I went to four of the largest churches in Mt. Vernon (all a part of the United Black Clergy) to find out by qualitative research (oral interviews) if these churches had Recovery Ministries. I also spoke with the pastor of a fifth church in April of the same year. Regarding the methodological type of research being qualitative in nature let me include briefly the following. I used “purposive samples: a selection of people who have awareness of the situation and meet the criteria and attributes that are essential to [my] research. These individuals have a

⁵⁹ Ronald Hopson and William B. Lawson, “Church, Family, and Community in the Prevention and Treatment of Addiction Among African Americans” in *Substance Abuse: A Comprehensive Textbook*, ed. Joyce H. Lowinson, M.D., Pedro Ruiz, M.D., Robert B. Millman, M.D., John G. Langrod, A.C.S.W., C.A.S.A.C., L.C.S.W., PhD. (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005), 1250.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 1250.

“vested interest and can be considered “key stakeholders.”⁶¹ All of the individuals who were interviewed signed consent forms agreeing to have their words in this document. They were not only interested in seeing me as a minister accomplish the project successfully, but also concerned about the research it generated.⁶² The results of the interviews are seen as follows as qualitative research.

Qualitative Research Churches

According to Deacon Dorothy Yarborough⁶³, Unity Baptist Church, located at 101 South 2nd Avenue, has no Recovery Ministry at this time. The church never attempted to start a ministry of this type as far as she knows. Deacon Yarborough believes that the holistic approach could help. She says their church has no way currently to identify those people who are struggling with addictions. She is not sure how to go about designing a recovery program. Deacon Yarborough also states that “individuals in this population need to know that the church is here for them spiritually, physically if possible (not to be manipulative) towards them but to listen to them.” As a representative of the church, she would be interested in learning more about a Recovery program as part of the future plans of the church. This meeting ended in a word of prayer, with all those in attendance; they each encouraged the project. Unity Baptist Church is the initial place that I began my actual research.

⁶¹ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, Oregon: PF and Stock Publishers, 2011), 82.

⁶² Ibid., 82.

⁶³ Dorothy Yarborough (Deacon), interview by author, 31 March 2011, Unity Baptist Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

Inclusively, Rev. William H. Mizell⁶⁴ (The Associate Pastor for Congregational Care) stated that Grace Baptist Church, located at 52 South Sixth Avenue, has “no Recovery Ministry.”⁶⁵ The church has never attempted to start one to his knowledge. Presently, people with substance abuse issues are referred to qualified individuals in the field of addiction, who are members of the church. After having a brief dialogue with Rev. Mizell, he agreed that “there is a need”⁶⁶ for a holistic ministry of this type, saying “it’s something to think about.”⁶⁷ Rev. Mizell wants me to keep him updated. He closed our visit out with a powerful word of prayer stating that I had Grace Baptist Church’s full support in my Doctoral endeavor.

In an expressive way, Bro. Henry Woodruff stated that Macedonia Baptist Church, 141 Rev. H. Dixon Boulevard, has no Recovery Ministry at this time. He remembered that the church attempted to start one year’s ago called “the Overcomers Ministry,” but for some reason it did not come to fruition. He also stated that, “a holistic recovery program would be helpful.”⁶⁸ Lastly, I spoke with Rev. Peter Wilson,⁶⁹ the pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, located at 411 South Eighth Avenue. He was in synchronization with the other churches responses, and also stated that his church has no Recovery Ministry at this time. He is in support of my efforts toward this project.

⁶⁴ Rev. William H. Mizell (Associate Pastor), interview by author, 31 March 2011, Congregational Care, Grace Baptist Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Henry Woodruff (Church Administrator), interview by author, 31 March 2011, Macedonia Baptist Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

⁶⁹ Rev. Peter Wilson (Pastor), interview by author, 11 April 2011, Mt. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

The Discussion of “Urgency”

Inclusively, the sense of urgency I have concerning the lack of recovery programs in churches in the Mt. Vernon community is, first and foremost, that God that has given us a mandate to address this problem. The role of clergy is for us not to forget that, “The African American church plays a crucial role in addressing contemporary social ills such as mental/emotional problems and substance abuse and dependence. The African American church continues to be the principal mental health resource within the African American community. Thus the African American church (and often the African American pastor), must be a primary source for prevention and intervention.”⁷⁰ Particularly, Jesus in the gospel of Matthew speaks clearly concerning doing ministry that touches “the least of these.” Some interpret this familiar term (“the least of these”) to mean the Nation of Israel, while others consider the meaning to merely refer to needy people in general.⁷¹ Either way, within the context of this particular pericope (known as a section of biblical text), Jesus discusses two operative behaviors (the first equates to the demonstration of God’s love). Jesus states, “For when I was hungry you gave Me food. I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink.” (Matt. 25:35 NKJV) Contrastingly in verse 42, Jesus says, “For when I was hungry you gave Me no food. I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink.” (Matt. 25:42 NKJV) Certainly, we know enough about Jesus (a parable speaker and teacher) to know that this is not just a literal understanding of “food” (as in perishable goods). I am constrained to believe that this feeding and non-

⁷⁰ Ronald Hopson and William B. Lawson, 1250.

⁷¹ “The Least of These My Brethren,” Matthew 25:40, *MacArthur Study Bible*, New King James Version (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1979), 1442.

feeding includes the wonderful widespread distribution of (versus the wicked withholding of) spiritual food as well. Considering this, if, the Church continues to (specifically) ignore the intentional holistic upheaval of those in the process of recovery by not launching programs that appeal to and attract them, I am confident that those struggling with substance abuse (the disease of addiction) will no longer look to the Church as viable means for support. Individuals from within this population may pass through the church doors from time to time, to get “a little something/something,” but as far as gaining optimum options of transformation (that the Holy Spirit can produce) from our places of worship it won’t happen. Those in the recovering population will continue to solely seek assistance from outside sources. While these various sources have been known to be very helpful, the Church still has a mandate it must fulfill, as well. Clearly, persons in the recovering population need to feel “the lifeline” of Jesus Christ being intentionally thrown out to rescue them and offer them a greater way of life.

Important to note is that,

Most of the early church-related [recovery] programs were Protestant. Although they stressed religious values and the importance of faith in a God who delivers people from their afflictions, these mainline churches tended to adopt a more secular approach to treatment...The current [approach] is quite a bit different. The Catholic Church, Islam, and Judaism have become increasingly involved in providing treatment and rehabilitation services to substance abusers since the late 1960's⁷²

For the most part [presently] in the Mt. Vernon community, “the participation of the local [church] congregations is confined to providing...meeting space in churches for

⁷² John G. Langrod et al., “Faith Based Approaches” in *Substance Abuse: A Comprehensive Textbook*, ed. Joyce H. Lowinson, M.D., Pedro Ruiz, M.D., Robert B. Millman, M.D., John G. Langrod, A.C.S.W., C.A.S.A.C., L.C.S.W., PhD. (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2005), 764.

Alcoholics and/or Narcotics Anonymous groups.”⁷³ While I can attest by being in many of the church buildings at meetings when I began my recovery process that this effort by the churches is a tremendous blessing to so many. It is an effort that has saved many, many lives. I sequentially, wonder when the church will grow to its next nurturing level and ask itself, “In what ways is the Church moving from offering practical gathering spaces (merely offering empty rooms for those in recovery to meet, greet, and speak out their issues) to specifically providing holistic Recovery Ministry programs designed to teach an addictive population holistic spiritually based living?” This is a growing edge for the Church, an edge it must consider.

Interestingly, there are so many “positive …aspects and dynamics of faith-based substance abuse treatment”⁷⁴ that churches can consider in creating programs. The following are some appealing considerations. Importantly, “guilt is removed when the [individual in the process of recovery “repents” and] is “saved”⁷⁵ Also, since “Forgiveness is central to acceptance by…‘God/Jesus’…the [person in the process of recovery] is once again valued as a worthy human being who was ‘lost’ and now is found, or ‘born again,’ thus enhancing the [individuals] self-concept or self-worth”⁷⁶ The Church (inclusive of its membership), based on the amount of love they show toward people in this population, can provide a “strong knitted and cohesive, religious family, providing spiritual and emotional support, as well as material/concrete assistance with the

⁷³ Ibid., 764.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 767.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

necessities of everyday life.”⁷⁷ Moreover, “The term ‘brother’ and ‘sister’ [is extended to the recovering person to] illustrate the concept of this newly acquired family.”⁷⁸

Parenthetically, it should be known that the Church being considered as a loving family is not always felt or interpreted by persons in the recovery process, because of the attitudes and behaviors that are demonstrated towards them by its members and leadership. As a result, many in this population have stigmatized the church, as being a place (an institution) that does not understand them. However, the blessing for the church that chooses to provide “the love of Christ” (unconditional love) toward this population, rather than the condemnation that is so often shown to persons in this population, is that the [former] “addict repented, accepted, and forgiven—[now] uses his or her past life (addiction and sin) to ‘teach’ others, which further enhances and reinforces the [person in the recovery’s] self-concept, ego, and super-ego by [the individual] becoming a role model.”⁷⁹ The Church can (if the leadership is not too intimidated by what God has done in those person’s lives) then bring these transformed individuals aboard to be used as servants in the building up of God’s kingdom. God can use these individuals (caterpillars) as God’s examples at the same church (egg) where “transformation” occurred. These persons in the recovery process can then help to transform other people’s lives. The reality is that all the glory belongs to God for the entire transformative process.

Clearly, there is a critical urgency that the clergy of Mt. Vernon face. We must not hide our faces, or be myopic in our belief system thinking that treatment for substance

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

abuse/disease of addiction is to be resolved only by secular (worldly) methods. Churches in our community must take notice of the presented statistical numbers that show that out of the five largest churches in Mt. Vernon, only 1% of persons in recovery are seeking treatment from the one holistic Recovery Ministry in our community, which is at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. Churches must become willing to get more involved in the transformative process of those in recovery in our community. The Church must also become agreeable about providing holistic programs, and equally become enthusiastic about wanting to empower those in this population. The Church can help persons in recovery to shed their past and become leaders. I agree that the Church can only do so much for a person in recovery (especially if that individual is in the early part of the process). That is why having a knowledge base of outside Recovery treatment sources is important for referral.

The design of a Church Recovery program must be tailored intentionally for the specific demographic that it wants to reach within the recovery population. In reality, “not all substance abusers can be reached, much less successfully treated through religiously oriented programs. Nevertheless, faith-based approaches merit serious consideration, because for some individuals with a high degree of [spiritual] motivation they have produced positive results, comparable to those of other treatment modalities.”⁸⁰

In particular, regarding the holistic Recovery program that I am presenting in this document, God gave me a vision that involved the synchronicity of spirituality (defined as a growing relationship with God) and education (whereby significant encouragement is given to adults to return to school to attain academic degrees) as a means of treatment.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 763.

The program was taught very successfully for 12 weeks at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church (See Chapter 5, Implementation of Proposed Solution).

What I have found to be at stake for me biblically and even theologically (in accordance with doing this recovery work for God) lends me to share the following thoughts and beliefs. First of all, I have made a paramount theological decision in keeping with God's word (as both a servant of God and an individual in the recovery process) to be "recycled" as many individuals are in the Bible. The Apostle Paul (who was Saul) and Matthew the tax collector are just two examples of individuals whose raggedy lives were "recycled" and used by God. (I will write about them specifically in Chapter 4). In addition, Jesus told Peter, "I have prayed especially for you...that your [own] faith may not fail; and when you yourself have turned..., strengthen and establish your brethren [sisteren]." (Luke 22:32 NKJV) I am presently living this Scripture out in my ministry. As I have grown in my relationship with God and in my understanding of being the process of recovery (over these last 14 years), it can be said forthrightly that my intention and contention is to be a positive example for those struggling with the disease of addiction (as well as those in recovery) at whatever stage or phase. As I live my "recycled" life, I aspire to continue being a resounding voice for the voiceless.

Significantly, I am even more theologically challenged and inspired about specifically doing this type of recovery work. When I look within the biblical text, I see how "overcomers" are given great responsibilities and guaranteed great rewards from God. (Rev. 2:26 NKJV) Therefore, I am clear that as an "overcomer," I must continue giving back what was so freely given to me by God. Ever since my life changed and I was delivered, God has given me an extreme amount of passion and commitment,

allowing me to become a dedicated servant in this field. Since being “recycled” I have been in God’s Hands, being used in the following ways. For seven years, I served as the leader of “A Greater Way of Life Recovery Ministry.” Moreover, I studied academically (receiving educational hours) and now presently hold my CASAC-T (Credentials Alcohol Substance Abuse Counseling-Training) certificate. In addition, I completed several hours towards my internship within the specialized addiction field at the Mount Vernon Methadone Clinic. Interestingly, I used to be a client at this very same clinic many, many years ago. My doing my internship there was a demonstration of the transformative power of God. My God was able to use me to give others (others I used to be on the clinic with) hope.

In addition, in 2010 I ended working a part-time position with the Salvation Army. While I was there, I had a caseload of up to fifteen men that I counseled. These men were undomiciled (homeless) individuals who were struggling with the disease of addiction. Moreover, I taught two classes during my tenure, Spirituality and Anger Management using the Bible as my reference point. I found this type of work to be such an opportunity especially after God had extracted me from the exact type of element (living a large portion of my life the same way as some of these men). It was in this Christian counseling position where God took me to another level of ministry. For fifteen months, God used me to help transform the lives of many, many (many) men. From the first day I started, transformation began to occur. The number of souls that came to Christ seems endless. It seems as though God was just sending the men in all day, every day. As they came into my office, and sat across the desk from me, I simply allowed God to use me to usher them back into relationship with God. Not only did

many of these men not know Jesus, but a multitude of them had not read the Bible or prayed in years. Several joined Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church based on their own decision. I took time out with each man over the course of my working there, extending the love of Christ, listening to their concerns (which were magnanimous) and letting them know that homelessness was not their permanent address. I spoke the word of God into their lives. Typically, like what happens in a lot of inpatient programs, some of the men in the program made poor decisions to leave (or got thrown out for some type of infraction), but many stayed, prayed, learned the Bible, and engaged in healthy spiritual growth. Most importantly, what I noticed (when I left the job) was, the majority of the men that I was assigned to counsel on my very first caseload (when I first started the job) had made it through the program, gotten jobs within the Salvation Army (or outside employment), and were contributing to society.

Parenthetically, individuals with backgrounds in addiction/recovery and their interest (or lack thereof) of developing (or not developing) “a relationship with God” (not just being involved in religion) is an essential subject of interest to me.

Over a year ago, I was “asked by a director of Archway Drug Treatment facility in Mt. Vernon, a division of St. John’s Riverside Hospital. to come and bring a “spiritual dynamic” to their program. I was extremely excited about the opportunity to volunteer my services at this facility for several reasons. First and foremost, God has restored my life and I am clear that my blessings are not to be kept just for myself. Secondly, many years ago, I was a client who graduated this very same program. Now, I have the privilege to give individuals in this population the message of liberation through spirituality. In July 2011, I began teaching “a curriculum that is specific to spirituality

and recovery issues; the one-hour study course is derived from Rick Warren's *A Purpose Driven Life*. " I treat all clients in the spirituality group as students. I run the group using a classic classroom structure. I inform individuals that I am preparing them for their future (spiritually and academically) for when they leave Archway. More than anything I share the love of Christ and treat clients as though they are God's people who have purpose. My volunteering there has also been a great opportunity to bridge new relationships between clergy and secular treatment programs in the community." As part of this Doctoral project, I conducted a "pilot study" at this facility that will bring forth critical data showing the spiritual growth and development of persons in the recovery process. The verbal feedback derived from Ms. Elaine Bryant (the director) and given to me after nine weeks of my teaching at the program was that 80% liked the spirituality group, while 20% had concerns.⁸¹ I have a high amount of respect for this particular facility, in that it is the only facility (to my knowledge) that welcomes God. Most of the other programs' approaches are different.

Sadly, in the city of Mt. Vernon, a man who attended the Mount Vernon methadone clinic and who had a multiplicity of emotional and health challenges waited for the train to come one day, sat on the tracks and intentionally took his life. I often think had the man had a relationship with God (or spirituality offered to him) he might still be alive today. Individuals in the process of recovery go through a plethora of challenging issues and face many temptations of "picking up." A relationship with God (regardless of how one wants to identify God) is essential in the recovering person's life, since it is God who has helped them in large part to put the drugs down. I am committed

⁸¹ Elaine Bryant (LMSW, CASAC, Director, Archway Drug Treatment Center), telephone interview by author, 13 September 2011, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

in every way to encouraging these women and men who attend the facility, and have also encouraged them strongly to consider pursuing education as a further means of liberation.

As a way of encouragement and testimony, I share with them how God allowed me to go back to school after taking a leave of absence for 27 years. I tell of how I then went back to school and graduated valedictorian with my Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology and then got a full scholarship to one of the top colleges in the world to work on my Masters of Divinity degree and how God has now blessed me to be able to work on my Doctorate. I assure them that if God did something so amazing, in my life as messed up of an individual that I was, that God can change their lives for them in the same way. This volunteer work that I partake in is a way of taking Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church out physically into the community.

As stated prior, for most people moving from addiction to recovery (and even in recovery itself) like transformation –“process” is important. What is vital for the church community (and even those outside the church) to understand is that everybody’s “process” is his or her own “process.” Succinctly, the thrust of my ministry is to encourage and convey to those in recovery or presently addicted (by way of inspiration not condemnation) that if God did it for me, God can do it for them. “What we see in Scripture is that “anyone who is united with the Messiah gets a [new beginning and] is created new. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons!” (2 Cor. 5:17 Message)

What is at stake for me (and the integrity of this project) on a social basis is the quality of life of the community. In other words, I want to see Mt. Vernon become a better community – a community whose residents are less dependent on illicit drugs and alcohol and more dependent upon God and the places of worship within the community.

As stated earlier, Mt. Vernon is the community where I grew up since the age of two. It is the community where I attended public schools, the community where God chose to perform God's miracle in my life. I want God to use me further in being a blessing to this community. Spiritual transformation and "recovery is not just for the self but for the family and community as well."⁸²

What is at stake for me politically in my doing a project such as this is my persistent hope of seeing "laws that funnel resources toward 'restoration' being passed."⁸³ In addition, I would like to see "the redistribution of resources that are presently allocated for punitive and incarceration issues being redirected and/or allocated to recovery and transformation initiatives in the urban community."⁸⁴ In doing this project, I see great opportunities for me to assist civic leaders as a means of providing spiritual/holistic intervention to those who find themselves caught in the grips of substance abuse/drug addiction. Incidentally, "The Obama Administration's approach to criminal justice drug policy is guided by three facts: that addiction is a disease that can be treated; people can recover, and new interventions are needed to appropriately address substance abuse and drug related crime."⁸⁵ If I can help encourage those in recovery (using a holistic approach of treatment) as a means of intervention/prevention it may be helpful toward the lifting up of society.

What is at stake for me psychologically is God is using me to help bring people in recovery to a place of liberation through education, by helping to re-stimulate their minds

⁸² Ronald Hopson and William B. Lawson, 1252.

⁸³ David Bradley, 5/13/11.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Valencia Mohammed, 12/1/12.

in a positive way. Expressively, “The mind is a magnificent tool, once one knows how to use it [for God’s purpose] it will be a powerful [instrument] to help [one] become what [he or she] wants to become.”⁸⁶ As stated earlier, education is one of the key components of this Demonstration Project. The Apostle Paul gives us the message so eloquently through his words, “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Rom.12:2 NKJV) My belief is that there is a place where the mind and the spirit meet, and in this place there is liberty. I believe that the Mt. Vernon Community has many individuals in the process of recovery, whose minds hold valuable treasure and are filled with academic excellence. Their minds are just waiting to be tapped into and further developed. These individuals need to know that clergy and community care, and believe in them.

What is at stake for me economically is the opportunity for me to prepare to a significant degree job-ready candidates (with sound spirituality, self-esteem, schooling, and social skills), who are willing to be a viable part of our community. I also see God using this project as an essential channel of my faith, where once I have completed God’s will (this Doctorate), God will give me increase, assuring my economic stability for the rest of my life. This will equate to economic empowerment, an area that I have failed to grow in since ceasing from substance abuse and coming to Christ. When I achieve it, I have promised to continue giving my services and treasures back to others (never, ever forgetting what has been freely given to me along life’s way to help me attain God’s promises).

What is at stake for me spiritually is not just my fulfilling the mandate that Jesus left for the “least of these,” but also my assignment is further clarified as I respond in a

⁸⁶ Casey Treat, *Spirit of the Mind* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Harrison House, 1989), 9.

like manner of Peter, who Jesus tells “Feed My Sheep.” (John 21:17 NKJV) I must be obedient to the directive/assignment from Jesus when I am given it. In many ways, I am feeding the sheep now by serving in ministry at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, volunteering in the community, and by doing the creative work in the construction of this Demonstration Project.

The problem of having no Recovery Ministries in churches in our community indeed requires systematic change. In a systematic way, “true solutions come from God; the Church acts as the conduit (with power) being able to translate many of life’s answers to God’s people.”⁸⁷

My expected outcome of the project is that all of the large (medium size) churches will incorporate some type of Recovery Ministry within their ministry’s structure. Also, my agenda is specifically to bridge new relationships between churches (clergy in particular) and secular treatment programs that will benefit persons in the addiction/recovery population. This coming together will make a huge difference from what is currently seen as the norm. I have already addressed this in my pilot study work in the community of Mt. Vernon at Archway. A considerable number of clients have mentioned their gratitude in having a representative of God at the facility once a week.

Adequate resources should be invested to address this challenge (of having no Recovery Ministries in churches in Mt. Vernon) by churches considering that people in recovery are a crucial part of humanity. By faith, of which it is impossible to please God without (Heb. 11:6), I feel confident that God will provide all tangible resources that are

⁸⁷ David Bradley, 5/16/11.

needed to get project's like these done within churches. The Apostle Paul wrote, "My God shall supply all [our] needs according to His riches in glory." (Phil. 4:19 NKJV)

Churches make a great investment when they continue to be "viable answers to hurting people."⁸⁸ Two of the greatest investments churches can make are "love" and the "willingness to want to help the recovering population." If the Church does not make intentional investments (i.e., offering a holistic/educational curriculum), it will potentially lose a population that it could strategically save. Personally, I think that the target group (churches) will respond favorably because it is a chance for them to provide a greater opportunity to bring more individuals to Christ, thereby transforming lives. Clearly, there is sufficient interest for this type of project, in the sense of payoff for those in the target group (churches) and their responding to the challenge. The payoff is more than a sense of personal satisfaction. The payoff is the "transformation" of individual's lives for the glory of God. The only way to assure that such "transformation" occurs is for the church to trust God and make the investment in the journey. Logically, since process is involved, it is not a short-term investment that will have immediate results. On the other hand, the process will be long term, gradual, and gratifying. Considering the long-term investment that was made by Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church (the egg) in my life over the years, it was well worth it. As a church, they trusted God and have received the pay-off with my life being totally transformed – To God be the glory! Now, I am giving back by helping to transform many other lives.

Essentially, "The job of the caterpillar [as mentioned earlier] is to eat and eat and eat. As [it] grows it splits its skin and sheds it. Food eaten at this time is stored and used

⁸⁸ David Bradley, 5/13/11.

later as an adult.”⁸⁹ Metaphorically, while in the caterpillar stage I ate quite a bit of leaves. As you have read in the document, much of the foodstuff must adequately be defined as “toxic leaves” (by my substance abuse). However, over the last 14 years, the leaves I constantly crave and consume are “healing spiritual and academic leaves” (particularly the Word of God). I must also mention that I have changed my dietary habits since coming into recovery and have become a vegetarian (eating many green vegetables and salad). This divinely driven in gestation has prepared me well for the pupa stage.

⁸⁹ Drexel University, 11/9/12.

CHAPTER 3

THE PUPA/CHRYsalis: STAGE OF CONVERSION PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world but Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2)

After the caterpillar has eaten and eaten, it progresses into the third phase (the pupa), where transformation takes place. This phase can be considered as the digestive period where food breaks down and nutrients are absorbed into the blood.⁹⁰. In reality, this is where the work for the Lord begins to manifest in the mind of the creature created. During this important time, ideas come to life, objectives are offered for consideration, and aims articulated. Although it's a phase of struggle and stretching, it's also a stage that sets the promised end in motion. I give you, the reader, a written pictorial of the goals and strategies that were set forth in my Demonstration Project Proposal, to be executed in the Plan of Implementation of this Demonstration Project.

Goals and Strategies:

Goal 1: To raise significant awareness at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church about the impact that an innovative Recovery Ministry will have in our community.

Strategy 1: Awareness video, along with the development of an original song about transformation, will be designed by Rev. Angela Ryan, Darin Kent and Melissina Reeburgh (Director of Music Ministry, Greater Centennial).

Footage will be gathered in January and February; video production

⁹⁰ Sylvia S. Mader, *Human Body* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2004), 73.

will take place in late February; and ministries viewing will occur in March.

Strategy 2: In January and February, Deja Jenkins, working with Site Team members, will develop a survey to ascertain the attitudes of her peers regarding addiction and drug use. Deja and an adult designee will administer the survey at her high school in Mt. Vernon. The Site Team will then analyze the survey results. Deja will address members of the Greater Centennial congregation about the survey, its results and how attitudes of young people will be incorporated into Rev. Angela Ryan's 12-session Recovery Ministry program.

Strategy 3: In March, Dr. Howard Fogel and Rev. Angela Ryan will conduct a workshop about addiction and spirituality. Results from Deja Jenkins' quantitative research will be included in the workshop.

Strategy 4: Rev. Angela Ryan will lead public speaking engagements at Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church from January to June.

Evaluation of Goal 1: As measured by a pre/post questionnaire, a majority of participants (at least 75%) who view the Raising Awareness video will have a better understanding of the need for an innovative holistic recovery program. A majority of workshop attendees (at least 75%) will also have a greater comprehension of the recovery issue as measured by a pre/post questionnaire. A post survey (only) of two of Rev. Ryan's speaking engagements will measure the success rate of her

teachings/preachings (50% or higher will be the measurement tool of learning).

Goal 2: Establish a design/promotional team to create the transformational model that will train other churches. Rev. Angela Ryan and Bro. David Bradley will select members of this team.

Strategy 1: Criteria for the design/promotional team will be decided in January and February.

Strategy 2: In March, selection and training of the team will begin, and promotional assignments will be given to team members. Giving of testimonies and distribution of flyers will also take place in March.

Evaluation of Goal 2: Rev Ryan will identify five criteria for participants to become members of the design/promotional team. These criteria will be approved by the Site Team. Rev. Ryan will have at least three people who fit the criteria and select them as members of the team.

Goal 3: Rev. Angela Ryan will develop and publicize a 12-session Recovery Ministry program about the importance of education and spirituality. The program is intended to illicit empowerment, teach discipleship, and to provide an atmosphere of mentoring, which will be done by Rev. Ryan.

Strategy 1: From January to March, Rev. Angela Ryan will write the syllabus for the 12-session program. In March, recruit participants for the program, which runs from April to July. Participants will be assigned specific tasks and responsibilities. These will include accountability of attending classes and the option to be in various aspects of the

Demonstration Project (i.e., public speaking, giving testimonies, passing out literature, qualitative research, and being a part of the final dissertation video).

Strategy 2: In June and July, the Social Networking Team (Deja Jenkins and Darin Kent) will use social networking tools (e.g., Facebook, Greater Centennial's website, YouTube, and Twitter) to publicize and engage the community in the new type of Recovery Ministry that Rev. Angela Ryan and her team are implementing.

Evaluation of Goal 3: Rev. Ryan will present to the Site Team a written outline for each of the 12 classes. The Site Team will review, verify, and approve the course outline. Darin Kent will upload material publicizing the 12-session program to three social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Greater Centennial's website, and YouTube).

Goal 4: Rev. Angela Ryan, with the assistance of a curriculum writer, will create an inspirational handbook – one that will serve as model for training churches to work effectively with the recovery community.

Strategy 1: Throughout July and August, Rev. Angela Ryan and the Site Team will prepare and organize the handbook/church model for Recovery Ministries.

Strategy 2: The handbook will be published in August.

Evaluation of Goal 4: Distribute the handbook to 90% of the seven largest churches in Mt. Vernon.

CHAPTER 4

ADULT BUTTERFLY: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

“Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding” (Prov. 4:7)

Biblical Research and Analysis

As butterflies mature through their process of becoming, they become interested in knowing more about their environment, which helps them to transform. What they learn assists them in flying to higher awareness.

As readers and researchers in today's ever changing culture, it must be conceptualized from a theological underpinning that transformation has several connotations for consideration. In particular, I will include within this chapter, along with my own understanding various denotations of transformation. In addition, two queries that are specific for exploration and excavation in the first portion of this chapter are, What are the transformational implications in Pauline literature specific to the Book of Romans? Secondly, How do the implications in Pauline literature compare to what is said about transformation from the gospel of Matthew's perspective?

In a significant way, the purpose of the research in this chapter will also compare aspects of Paul's transformative experience and ministry with my own story. Moreover, I will incorporate into my composition further research by way of interviews with persons from treatment centers and a few churches in Mt. Vernon, N.Y., regarding what they are explicitly doing to assist persons in the recovery process.

The research in this chapter is to support my position that transformation does and can occur by the synchronization of spirituality and education (meaning the mind being enhanced academically). It will show that a holistic Recovery program is a valid means of spiritual, academic and social transformation. Such a program equates to transformation (renewal) for persons in the recovery process providing healing, particularly when the program is offered within the context of church-based settings.

In looking at a few definitions of transformation, we first learn that the traditional meaning of the word transformation from Matthew Poole's *Commentary*, which exhorts: "Be you regenerated, and changed in your whole man; beginning at the mind, by which the Spirit of God worketh upon the inferior faculties of the soul."⁹¹ Poole also states (critical to transformation), the progress of sanctification means dying to sin more and more, and living to righteousness more and more.⁹²

Next, the Greek word for biblical "transformation" is *metamorphoo*, from which we get the English word metamorphosis: i.e., a complete change, such as a caterpillar turning into a butterfly. Biblical transformation, then, applies to an individual believer's progress in sanctification.⁹³

The above understandings of "transformation" best describe my spiritual and academic journey. In looking at transformation, please also consider the following: "Transformation" is substantial and deep, intent on

⁹¹ Lynn & Sarah Leslie, "What is Transformation?," <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/05/sarah-leslie/transformation.htm> (Accessed October 30, 2012).

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

re-forging the very foundations of Protestantism, western civilization, and ultimately the governance of the entire earth.⁹⁴

Transformation in its new definition and implications are impacting and affecting every aspect of our being. The transformation is constantly being transformed.

While lip service is being paid to the traditional definitions you read about above, in reality the word “transformation” now indicates a societal, cultural and global revolution. Here is one new definition which hints at the larger scale: Transformation is defined as the measurable supernatural impact of the presence and power of God on human society, sacred and secular.⁹⁵

Specifically, transformation in the church encompasses several components: In the church, this is characterized by increased holiness of life, accelerated conversion growth, reconciliation in relationships, mobilization of gifts and callings, and an increased relevance to and participation in greater society.⁹⁶ Culturally, transformation takes many forms. It touches the correction of society, focusing on economics, education and the errors in crime, connecting the scriptural emphasis of helping the “least of these.”⁹⁷ To this end, a catalytic core of saints typically embrace a lifestyle of persistent repentance, humility, prayer and sacrificial servanthood that attracts the favor and presence of God, and breaks the predominating influences of the ruling power structures of human flesh and the devil.⁹⁸

For purposes of this paper, you, the reader, should know that I will digress somewhat from this wider denotation of transformation, and focus more specifically on

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

“transformation” that happens particularly in individuals, honing in on the progressive spiritual change that occurs in person’s lives (as metaphorically categorized in the metamorphosis of a butterfly).

Moving on, let me express briefly my thoughts about Paul’s transformation as it relates to me and this project. Paul’s implication of transformation discussed in Romans 12:2, where it states “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God,” is the underlying theme of the solution to my challenge statement. It is also very comparative to the foundation of my transformative story. Spiritual regeneration and intellectual stimulation have continued to be the major force of my transformative reality and recovery.

For Paul, in the above text, it is forbidden for believers to conform to the pattern of this world once conversion has taken place. The word “pattern” is not just used here as having the same attitudes, behaviors, characteristics or deadline desires that can exist in a Christless culture. However, Paul pushes the reader of the Biblical text to understand the full extent of the word pattern. A pattern is usually cut to the exactness of the material that is being made. Christians, for Paul, are no longer to be exactly like those in the world. However, all who believe in Jesus as Lord must be imitators of Christ. Moreover, there must be evidence of change even if progress is gradual. This transformational shift from bad behavior to blessed beholding of God takes place first, as Paul strongly suggests, by the mind being renewed. My belief is that transformation happens as people surrender their will and submit to do God’s. It is a process and, for it to be achieved, it involves the work of the Holy Spirit. Biblical evidence shows that

worldly thinking is contrary to God. However, God is patient with God's children and is constantly giving us signs that transformation can occur.

Paul grows in his understanding of what transformation means when he addresses the church at Ephesus. In chapter 4:23, he writes, "and be renewed by the spirit of your mind." Transformation (mental regeneration) can only occur when spiritual degradation has been put under the blood of Jesus.

The fact that Paul talks tirelessly about his story from Saul to Paul has a transformative effect. Readers comprehend that what happened to him was more than a mere name change. Instead, Paul had a divine encounter with Jesus. There are several places in Scripture where readers are made aware (by Paul himself) of his conversion experience (Acts 9: 1-31, Acts 26:9-23). When reading the biblical text, Paul's voice can be heard defiantly coming through antiquity, making its way through the annals of biblical history and giving his testimony succinctly out of the pages of the text. Although recycled or repetitive in nature, Paul shares his story compassionately, with compulsion, and often as a way to convince hearers (or readers) of the impact Jesus has had on him.

Similar to Paul, on January 14, 1999, I had a divine encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. Frankly, since that day (since that hour), my life has never been the same. God has made me over and given me new life. God's restoration has affected me spiritually, mentally, and physically, creating a sense of progressive healing on the whole person. I often feel as though Jesus raised me from the dead, and because of Him I am living in my second lifetime. I share my testimony with others emphatically, energetically, and as a way to educate persons to what Jesus has done in my life. Since my conversion, I have not been able to keep quiet about Who the Lord is, and all the Lord has done for me.

This is significantly comparative to Paul's manner of perpetual verbiage about the Jesus who changed his life.

After Paul's conversion on the Damascus Road, Paul concentrated his ministry efforts on being an influence towards winning others to Christ. Importantly, he founded churches (structured ministries) that concentrated on building the spiritual (and mental) conditions of those who followed his ministry. In essence, as one who was transformed, Paul was "a slave for Christ" (Romans 1:1) and became committed for life to help transform others.

Synonymous to Paul, as one who has been blessed to be given a tremendous transformation story by God, after my conversion, I have particularly focused on ministry that edifies, educates, and enlightens individuals. Throughout this document, I have written about the extensive work I have allowed God to use me in to bless others. Like Paul, God is using me to be an example of hope to people to show that the cross of Christ still works. Parenthetically, the cross of Christ is what transformed Paul. When looked at closely, Jesus suffered on the cross, died on the cross, was taken down from the cross, buried in a borrowed tomb, and on the third day, was resurrected before he even encountered Paul on the Damascus Road. Realistically, had there been no cross, no suffering or no resurrection, there would be no grace, (no forgiveness of sins that were pleasing to God). Therefore, the significance of Jesus meeting Paul would not have the transformative power or reality that it had. Likewise for me, the experience of God meeting (and speaking) to me in an in-patient facility many years ago is connected to the cross. The experience was *pre*-pared in advance. I write this because it was on the cross where the blood came streaming down to wash away the stench of sin. The cross is

where Jesus died to extend the forgiveness of sins to those who believe. The cross is where Jesus became the propitiation (the satisfaction) for Christians' sins. The cross is where redemption and justification (just as if it didn't happen)⁹⁹ took place. The cross is where Jesus had me (and all humanity) on His mind. Based on this thinking, the cross is a part of conversion. It is confirmed in Romans 5: 8-9, where it is written, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more than having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." With Paul living such an incorrigible life of sin, a life contrary to Christ, he was able to have his former conduct completely erased. It was because of Jesus' sacrifice that Paul was able to both benefit from and be representative of the cross on Calvary.

Correspondingly, as one who lived many of my years in sin(s) that I knew were wrong, separated from God, under self-direction, opposing God's law, and not thinking about the severity of the outcome, I find myself being overwhelmingly grateful that God chose to even have an meaningful encounter with me after all my disobedience. The experience of God showing up on January 14, 1999, was so significant to me that I decided to not just give my life to Jesus, but to give Jesus all of me. I know that it was a divine encounter because I could not have surrendered my all to God any other way. As stated earlier, I gave my life to Christ after coming home from treatment and have not looked back to the world ever since. Like Paul, I also made a decision to work for the Lord for the rest of my life.

⁹⁹ Bishop W. Darin Moore, content of many sermons.

Clearly, “Paul is, without doubt, one of the most important theological thinkers of earliest Christian history. It is Paul who gave us the foundational Christian doctrine of justification by faith and the most highly developed doctrine of grace in the New Testament. Of all his writings, Romans stands out as the most comprehensive presentation of his theology.”¹⁰⁰

Author Puskas agrees, [Romans is] one of Paul’s most influential books.¹⁰¹ He adds, “Romans draws heavily on the themes of justification by faith, the promise to Abraham, the failure of the works of the law, Sonship, life in the Spirit, and union with Christ...”¹⁰² Because Paul is unable to be present in Rome, he communicated with the Christians there by means of a letter.¹⁰³

Specifically regarding Paul’s “practical exhortations for Christian solidarity”¹⁰⁴ in Romans 12: 1-2, there are four relevant questions for consideration when thinking about transformation. They are, “What does it mean to be transformed,” “What is the goal of transformation,” “What should motivate us to undergo transformation,” and “What does one do in order to experience transformation”¹⁰⁵

Pushing the envelope even further, as one who understands and agrees that transformation is a process, I recognize that once undeniable transformation begins to

¹⁰⁰ Dennis E. Smith, *Introduction to the New Testament* (St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2004). 77.

¹⁰¹ Charles B. Puskas, *The Letters of Paul: An Introduction* (Collegeville, Minnesota: A Michael Glazier Book, The Liturgical Press, 1993), 71.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Mark Copeland “The Epistle to the Romans: Be Transformed” http://executableoutlines.com/ro2/ro12_2.htm (Accessed December 6, 2012).

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

occur, then as long as one is being transformed (is changing, growing healthily in mind, body, spirit), then I concur that transformation is taking place. God is in charge of one's spiritual transformation. It is true, however, that our freewill allows us the ability to surrender (or not) to what God wants for our lives. "The idea being commanded by Paul is that Christians are to undergo a complete change, which under the power of God, will find expression in [ones] character and conduct (Vine's)¹⁰⁶ I believe that when that change/transformation begins to take place, how it continues, and when it reaches perfection, happens according to God's plans. (Romans 8: 29 NKJV)

Interestingly, an observer charting transformation can become interested in the rate "the progress" of transformation takes place. By this I mean one may want to evaluate the positive outcomes of the transformed individual, in synchronicity with the time frame that the transformation has taken place thus far. Still others may want to learn (the how) "the process" by which the transformation has or is taking place. For example, they may want to note what measures were used to contribute to the person's "change." Transformation is to be understood, not as perfection, but as God's process. God is the orchestrator of transformation. Transformation can also be considered personal. The type of transformation that God does in one individual may not happen to another person, or at the same rate. The most important thing is that transformation occurs. In Romans 12: 2 "Paul uses the passive voice indicating that transformation is something we allow to be done to us not something we do by our own power alone. Rather, we submit to God's

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

power and by His grace...We are ‘changed into another form’...We become a ‘new creation.’¹⁰⁷ We become butterflies.

Matthew’s Implications of Transformation

Comparatively, Matthew brings several interesting perspectives in his gospel that can be conceptualized as transformation (a shift moving from the Jewish culture toward Christianity). Before reviewing these aspects you, the reader, should know that,

Matthew...gives not only the genealogy, but the history of the miraculous birth of Jesus. [Stating] even if [there were no] consensus of tradition, everyone must feel that this gospel is Hebrew in its cast, in its citations from the Old Testament, and its whole bearing. [The book of Matthew] presents the Messiah chiefly as ‘the Son of Man,’ ‘the Son of David,’ ‘the Son of God...the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy; the realization of Old Testament life, faith, and hope.¹⁰⁸

When examined closely,

The Jewish flavor of Mathew’s gospel is remarkable. This is evident even in the opening genealogy, which Matthew traces back only as far back as Abraham...Matthew’s purpose [in writing] is...to demonstrate that Christ is the King and Messiah of Israel. This gospel quotes more than 60 times from Old Testament prophetic passages, emphasizing how Christ is the fulfillment of all those promises.¹⁰⁹

In essence, the gospel of Matthew’s perspective of “transformation” appropriately introduces Jesus Christ (in the totality of Who He is, including Jesus’ ministry) as being the model of transformation that the Judaic culture would learn from and follow. Stating it differently, Jesus became for Jewish communities the old concepts (Old Testament) now actualized. For the Jewish leaders it forced them into a new way of thinking, behaving, and subsequently a new way of living.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing, 1971), 64.

¹⁰⁹ *MacArthur Study Bible*, 1389.

In Matthew, Jesus the “Christ is the Physician, Whom they that are in health need not, but they that are sick [need]. And so Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners not to repentance...but to Himself, to the Kingdom; and this is the beginning of repentance”¹¹⁰ Repentance which leads to salvation, equals transformation. In order for transformation to occur, challenges such as sin, sickness, and suffering must be evident in order for God to orchestrate a change for the better. Clearly, “conversion for Matthew is not sudden or final, but gradual and continual.”¹¹¹

The title given to the event in Jesus life in which He was transfigured is called the Transfiguration. It is the Greek word for metamorphosis. In this account “Moses and Elijah appeared to Him, and a Voice spoke from heaven. In Matthew 17:2, “Jesus underwent a dramatic change in appearance so the disciples could behold Him in His glory.”¹¹² The transfiguration also in Mark’s gospel, “is one of the few accounts in Jesus’ life outside of the passion narrative that contains a chronological tie, after six days. The purpose of the transfiguration is primarily for the three disciples [Peter, James, and John]. This is clear from the Voice, which is directed to them, and the frequent use of ‘them.’ What the Voice was for Jesus at His baptism, ‘Thou art’ (Mark 1:11), the Voice at the transfiguration was for Peter, James, and John, ‘This is’ (Mark 9:7). Inserting parenthetically, I’m a witness that transformation comes from hearing God’s Voice! What actually happened in Jesus’ transfiguration has primarily been understood in two ways. The first understands it as breaking through His humanity of the true form (*Gk.*

¹¹⁰ Alfred Edersheim, 507.

¹¹¹ Keith Russell, *In Search of the Church* (New York: The Alban Institute, 1994), 30.

¹¹² *Mac Arthur Study Bible*, 1424.

morphe) of the Son of God...the second as the glimpse of the glory of the Son of God at His Paraousia.¹¹³

Comparatively, the similar experience that happened to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew's gospel can be compared to what Christians should exemplify in their practical service to God in Romans 12:12. Essentially, "Jesus came not only to fulfill the law, but [also] to transform it through the gift of the Holy Spirit who fills our hearts with the love of God."¹¹⁴

Research and Analysis into Practical Methodology

As a way to gain knowledge and insight regarding the exact nature of what treatment centers are offering clients in the Mt. Vernon community it was necessary for me to conduct my research directly with these facilities. In particular, I formatted my questions in the following manner: In what ways are existing treatment facilities meeting the diverse needs of substance abusers? What is the demographic profile of those seeking treatment? I wanted those answering to provide me with as much information as they felt comfortable sharing with me things such as what is offered at the program, ways the program helps clients, what works at the program, and what needs improvement at the program. I also asked the person interviewed for statistical and demographical information to add to the project.

New York Theological Seminary requires that consent forms were to be signed by all persons who would officially be a part of each student's project. In addition, each NYTS student was given the flexibility to tailor the Consent Form from so that it would

¹¹³ Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, "Transfiguration" (San Francisco, California: Harper Collins, 1988), 1171.

¹¹⁴ "The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary and Meditation," <http://www.rc.net/wcc/readings/matt2531.htm> (Accessed December 9, 2012).

be specific to their project. (See Appendix E, Consent Forms) The following is the data gathered from those interviews.

**Qualitative Research:
Interviews with Treatment Center Manager's Mt. Vernon Community
Archway Treatment Center**

On Friday, August 24, 2012, at 1:15 p.m., I visited St. John's Riverside Hospital, Smithers Alcoholism Treatment and Training Center, also known as the Archway Clinic. The facility is located at 20 East 1st Street, Mount Vernon. I met with Ms. Elaine Bryant, LMSW, CASAC, director of the program, to find out what in fact were the diverse ways in which this clinic meets the needs of persons with drug and alcohol problems. We sat in her office, which was dawnded in Afro-Eccentric culture. The office has a ceiling that is about 12 feet tall, with walls crafted in deep cedar wood. From the office setting, with papers all over her desk, and the computer on (most of the time), one can see that Ms. Bryant is always busy with detailed work. I was grateful that she took a moment to speak with me about the program and what it offered.

During our interview, Ms. Bryant informed me that the program offers the following groups for clients: Holistic Recovery (Spirituality) Anger Management, Nutrition, Coping Skills Triggers, Relapse Prevention, Stages of Change (Pre-Contemplation Contemplation), Seeking Safety, Arts and Crafts, Chemical Dependency Education, Life Skills, Parenting, Thinking for Change, Groups for Co-Occurring Disorders (MICA), and Narcotics Anonymous Meetings.

Ms. Bryant shared that each group at the clinic is held for one hour. Moreover, the functioning skills of the clients determine the level of clinical care that is given (whether individuals go to clinic groups three to five days a week for one hour) or

become a part of the day rehab, which is held for four hours a day Monday through Friday. Ms. Bryant states that, “Completion of the program can take anywhere from three months to one year, depending on the client’s ability to stay clean and sober.”

Inclusively, Archway has a psychiatrist, a minister (which I am blessed to have become a voluntary part of their team) and a vocational education person at the facility. Meals are also served on the premise. In addition to the day program, the Archway clinic offers groups in the evenings to accommodate clients. Ms. Bryant shared with me that, all of the present groups that are being offered at Archway are working, except for the group called “Life Skills.” This particular group needs development. Archway is working on implementing a new syllabus for the group. It is important for me to once again share that Ms. Bryant has been very supportive as well as provided essential information to help me with this project.

Mount Vernon Open Door Outpatient Treatment Center

On Friday, August 24, 2012, at 1:55 p.m., I traveled to Mt. Vernon “Open Door” Program located at 54 South 3rd Avenue, Mt. Vernon, New York (second floor). This is the second interview for the project. Informatively “Mt. Vernon Open Door Drug [Program] in Mount Vernon is a private company categorized under Community Action Agencies... it was established in and incorporated in New York”¹¹⁵ On the above date, I had the pleasure of speaking with a counselor of many, many, years of the program, Mr. Rick Jones, Assistant Clinical Supervisor. Parenthetically, Open Door is the outpatient facility that God ordered my steps to attend when I came home from New York Hospital. I attended this program uninterrupted for one year, and graduated. I am ever indebted to

¹¹⁵ Open Door Program, <http://www.manta.com/c/mmnmbc/mt-vernon-open-door-drug>
(Accessed August 24, 2012).

the help that I received at the program, especially from my counselor Mr. Ron Hood, and the additional support from Mr. Rick Jones, who is still at the facility after all these years. These individuals witnessed first-hand the transformative work that God has done in my life. They often encourage me.

When I arrived at Open Door in 1999, I had just given my life to Christ, and was a new-bee in recovery. Prior to that, all I knew how to do was use and abuse drugs. Since I was determined to live a new life and make it, I took the advice given to me, and arrived for groups every day. In this way, I could get what the program had to offer. I am grateful I made it successfully the first time around graduating in 2000. I still have the framed certificate hanging on my wall. God used the combination of Church on Sundays, Bible Study on Tuesdays, outpatient groups in the day, NA meetings in the evenings, and counseling (which was necessary after the life I lived) to craft the onset of my recovery journey.

Back to the research, the interview that I did with Mr. Jones (specific in nature to this project), involved me asking him what diverse ways was Open Door program meeting the needs of persons with drug and alcohol problems. Mr. Jones shared with me that the program offers the following groups: Addiction Recovery, Men/Women Group, Co-Occurring Group, DWI-Alcohol, Individual Counseling, Motivational Group, Anger Management, GED, Relapse Prevention, Life Skills, Advanced Process Groups (for clients with six months or more, preparing them to leave), AMP Group (an adolescents group), Marijuana Treatment, as well as Narcotics Anonymous, which has meetings on the premise every day.

Each group is offered for 60 minutes (except for the Addiction and Recovery Group, which is on Mondays; it is held for 90 minutes). A psychiatrist and two nurses are on staff to meet the needs of the clients at this program. Open Door also has a night program available to meet the needs of their clients. Mr. Jones stated that the completion of the program depends entirely on the individual. The program's objective is to help clients to not just get clean and sober, but to also have them aspire to become vocationally involved, and to be "work ready" when they leave the program. After asking Mr. Jones the question, "What's working at the program and what needs improvement or development?" He took a moment to consult with one of his colleagues. After a moment the response was, "the Life Skills group...there's not enough resources."¹¹⁶

Regarding the demographical profile of those seeking treatment at Open Door, I was told to call back and talk to the Office Administrator who was on vacation at this time. Mr. Jones stated that I could get any statistical information about the program I needed from her. Therefore, on September 18, 2012, I telephoned Open Door Treatment Facility and spoke directly with Ms. Dionne Modest, Office Administrator. Interestingly, she is the initial person that I met when I walked into Open Door 14 years ago. Ms. Modest informed me that "presently there are 73 clients who are seeking treatment in both the day and night program. 90% of the clients are Black, 7% are White, and 3% are classified as other."¹¹⁷ Ms. Modest also stated that, "the client's age range is between 21 and 78 years old."¹¹⁸ She was glad to be able to assist me with this project.

¹¹⁶ Rick Jones, interview by author, 24 August 2012, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

¹¹⁷ Dionne Modest, telephone interview by author, 18 September 2012, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

Mount Vernon Hospital Methadone Maintenance Treatment Program

On Tuesday August 28, 2012, at 1:45 p.m., I met with Ms. Pam Wainaina, who is a counselor (CASAC-T) at the Methadone clinic in Mt. Vernon. During an interview that took place at lunch, I learned the following information regarding the diverse ways this program meets the needs of persons with drug and alcohol problems. Ms. Wainaina told me that the clinic has been in existence for about 40 years. Inserting parenthetically, this is the same methadone clinic that I attended for many years until I got off of methadone in 1999.

Informatively, the program offers individualized counseling for clients that involves motivational interviewing. In addition, there are three types of groups that are provided. The first group Ms. Wainaina discussed was called, “Self Help Support.” It is a group designed for Harm reduction, helping individuals to become motivated to maintain sobriety, stable relationships, self-esteem, and to gain the desire to return to work; the group is held three times a week Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Secondly, Ms. Wainaina highlighted the group known as “Life Skills Management, which involves Coping Skills, day-to-day issues such as making and keeping appointments, decision making, and how to deal with obstacles and barriers (such as medical or family issues) that may impede clients’ progress in recovery. The group meets once a week, on Wednesday morning. The third group discussed was “Parenting,” which the acronym COSA (children of substance abusers) is used. The group meets once a week, with men and women helping them to facilitate parenting skills. They also work closely with child protection service (CPS), giving reports as

needed. The documentation is used in the court system. Domestic violence issues are also discussed in the “Parenting group.”

Ms. Wainaina shared the following statistical information regarding the demographics of the Mount Vernon Hospital Methadone maintenance program: 294 clients are presently seeking help at the program, 114 are female, and 180 are male. Regarding the racial makeup of clients, 121 are Black, 136 are White, and 37 are Hispanic (no Jamaicans attend the clinic). The average age range of clients is between 27 and 60 years old. As aforementioned in this document, Ms. Wainaina was the counselor assigned to me when I was a client many years ago. She still works at the facility helping others, and has been very supportive of my doing this project from the very beginning.

The Salvation Army: Mt. Vernon Site

On August 31, 2012, at 5:00 p.m., I met with Mr. La Vonne Drummer. He is the head counselor of the Salvation Army located at 745 South Third Avenue, Mt. Vernon. I met with him to conduct a brief interview regarding the diverse ways that the Salvation Army meets the needs of persons with drug and alcohol problems.

Informatively,

The Salvation Army was founded in 1865 in London, England by William booth. It is a Christian church committed to preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and providing service to men and women with varied needs believes that God directs everyone [to] enter the center so they can find a life of dignity and Holiness through His redeeming love. [God's] love is a free gift of grace offered to all.¹¹⁹

According to Mr. Drummer, the population that the Salvation Army serves at this location is 100% males. Out of this population, 80% are Black, 10% Latino, and 10% Euro-American. Mr. Drummer stated that 60% are between the ages of 45-55, 20%

¹¹⁹ Salvation Army, Standard Facts and Information Handout Sheet, given to employees.

between the ages of 35-45, 10% between the ages of 20-25, and 10% are between the ages of 55-65 years old. Informatively, “Men come to this program with many needs and attitudes. Some are not committed to change, most are.”¹²⁰ The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Program offers the men alternatives to homelessness.

To state it plainly,

In many communities there are men whose lives are in shambles. Some suffer from drug addiction, some suffer from alcoholism. Some are unemployed and lack the skills needed to find a job. Many wander the streets, without homes to help. The Salvation Army’s Adult Rehabilitation Centers offer these men a second chance, an opportunity to start again. Each center provides individual group counseling, training in job skills, and other tools for rebuilding positive lifestyles. Each in residence program puts the men into clean, comfortable living facilities. Regular meals, medical check-ups and Alcoholics Anonymous programs combine to make each center a place for new beginnings. Each center also offers a very comprehensive spiritual regeneration program in which all clients are expected to participate.¹²¹

In particular, Mr. Drummer shared that the Salvation Army (Mt. Vernon location) provides each man with individual counseling to assist in stabilizing his cognitive processes. During the group settings, video recovery information is also offered and discussed. The men are allowed to go to church as well as to attend individual support meetings in the community. In this case, the men are particularly given the option to worship at other churches besides the Salvation Army, and go to outside recovery meetings of their choice. The men are also given the option to go to a spiritual Recovery program called “Celebrate Recovery,” which is not located in Mt. Vernon; a Salvation Army van takes the men to this meeting. There are several other group meetings that are held at the Salvation Army. They include: Vespers, Bible Study, in-house AA meetings,

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

General Social Skills, and Regression Prevention. Also, during the Sunday morning Worship service, the men have the opportunity to worship and share in service together. Reiterating, the Salvation Army is a work Recovery program for persons in the undomiciled (homeless) population.

Important to note,

The primary purpose of an Adult Rehabilitation Center is the spiritual regeneration and rehabilitation of men who have undergone a process of disaffiliation from those significant ties, which enable individuals to take advantage of the opportunities and cope with the tribulations of everyday life. These men might be handicapped mentally, morally, physically, and socially. More importantly, they are handicapped spiritually (they need Jesus). The center affords them the opportunity to gain insights into their problems, while acquiring self-respect, and to develop moral and spiritual principals of conduct and habits of industry that will enable them to gain purpose and meaning in their lives.¹²²

What must be considered about the Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Programs is,

Unlike many programs, these centers are self-supporting. Clothing and household items are collected from communities. These items are brought to the centers workshops where they are repaired and refurbished, then resold in Salvation Army family stores. These centers are open to all men who have an identifiable and treatable handicap regardless of race, color or religious belief. The success rate of the Salvation Army program is high. There are over 100 centers across the United States¹²³

The Renaissance Project Inc.

On August 31, 2012, I conducted the final interview to gather research from treatment centers. On this day, I did a telephone interview with Mark Seides, PhD. The estimated time was about 10:40 a.m. As with everyone interviewed before him, I was concerned about the diverse ways that Renaissance meets the needs of persons with drug

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

and alcohol problems. In a helpful way, Dr. Seides shared with me that the program offers the following: an Orientation group, a Women's group, a Relapse Prevention group, an Anger Management group, and new to the program is a Criminal Justice group. This group is designed for individuals who have been referred for legal matters such as DUI and centers on "Thinking Errors." The course has a 25-40-page curriculum. Clients are to answer questions from books that are provided with their written responses.

Regarding my attaining the demographics for this program, it was necessary for me to make a follow up telephone call on September 11, 2012 (at Dr. Seides' request) to gather the following information. During this call, Dr. Seides stated that, "75% of the clients are men and 25 % are women. In particular, the age category is broken down as follows: 15%-20% are between 18-25 years old and 75% are between 25-40 years old. The remaining 5%-10% of clients range between the ages of 40 and 60."¹²⁴ Dr. Seides was very helpful in providing assistance for me with this project.

Analysis of Spiritual Life and Practice

In looking at the analysis of spiritual life and practice, two questions are important for purposes of this document. "What are churches in Mt. Vernon, New York, doing to assist those with alcohol and drug problems and How can they move to provide a more holistic approach, teaching this population to have lives that include spirituality and education? In order for me to ascertain this information I engaged in the following research.

¹²⁴ Mark Seides, PhD. (Renaissance Program), telephone interview by author, 31 August 2012, Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

Mt. Vernon Churches

On August 28, 2012, at 9:50 p.m., I did a telephone interview with Ms. Diane Evans Beckett, who is a member of Sacred Heart Church located in Mt. Vernon, New York. The interview I conducted was to ascertain what in particular was her church doing to assist those with drug and alcohol problems. According to Ms. Beckett, the church serves many elderly individuals from under-populated countries (Africa, Haiti, and Trinidad). She stated, “It is hard to get them to listen” to recovery messages. No one wants to talk about addiction,” says Ms. Beckett. She went on to say, “It’s okay for the man to drink.” This in part could be due to the patriarchal norm in some of these countries. She expressed with me that Sacred Heart presently, is only able to contribute one service out of the year to dissuade persons from intentionally abusing drugs and alcohol, and encourage the recovery process. This day is set aside and called “Recovery Sunday.” It took place during the 9:30 service on September 9. She is responsible for getting a speaker to come in and speak to the congregation during and after the 9:30 mass. The speaker is to share with the congregation his/her experiences, and tell individuals where they can go to get help. Importantly, the priest works one on one with any person who seeks counseling.

Besides being a member of the church, Ms. Becket brings a wealth of the following experience to the church. She has 25 years clean and sober, as well as a CASAC certificate. She has worked in the field of addiction for a number of years. Ms. Becket was recently speaking with her colleagues at Sacred Heart about the lack of recovery opportunities at the church. She expresses that she is open to hear more about the “Progression in Session” class.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED SOLUTION: ACTUAL PROJECT

“For We are Christ’s Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 4:10)

Steps to Approval of Demonstration Project Proposal

On October 17, 2011, the Site Team members wrote the first letter to Dr. Keith Russell, stating that they had reviewed my Demonstration Project Proposal and were happy to approve and support my work going forward. The work had to go through several stages of rewrites before final approval.

One of the greatest things that happened in my course of studies, while taking a Leadership Course with Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall, was him agreeing to be my advisor. He announced this decision to the entire class after I did my oral Power-Point presentation in June 2011. I could clearly see how his giftedness in leadership abilities both in academics and ministry would enhance my Demonstration Project. Interestingly, Dr. Cohall invited me to open up a Women’s Conference and to do a workshop at his church where he is the pastor. Being a “transformational leader” who needed more leadership insight, I felt that Dr. Cohall would be instrumental as an advisor to help me enhance my skills as it related to this academic project. Informatively, it was on January 9, 2012, that I received exciting news from Joan Shedlovsky confirming that my Demonstration Project Proposal ***“Stages and Phases of Transformation: The Responsibility That Places of Worship Have in the Lives of People With Past and Present Addictions”*** had been approved. Our team, which had worked so very hard in accomplishing this goal, was

extremely glad to hear this news. I was ecstatic in the Holy Spirit as God was drawing me closer to God's purpose.

Preparation and Planning: Innovative Spirituality & Addiction Workshop

It must be stipulated from the very beginning of this chapter that the Innovative Spirituality & Education Addiction Workshop, which took place on March 30, 2012, at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church took several months of strategic organization and planning. In order for both effectiveness and accuracy to be determined in a project of such magnitude, and as a way to facilitate and ensure appropriate preparation, several significant meetings were held prior to the workshop between my Site Team members and me. The members of my Site Team are a special group of individuals who God Himself ordained from the foundation of the world to work with me on this project.

By way of introduction, the Site Team brings a wealth of resources by way of gifts, talents, and expertise. We have on the team Bro. David Bradley (Business Manager of Greater Centennial A. M.E. Zion Church); he is the point man who is phenomenal with numbers, statistics, gathering research, etc. Joan Shedlovsky enjoys a career as an Administrative Assistant and brings to the team gifts of administration (organizational skills including the transcribing of "minutes" from all of our meetings). Darin Kent (DK) is a gifted and dynamic videographer at Greater Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church. He is also the president and CEO of his own business called *Jesus Piece Productions*. Bro. Darin is fortunate to be fluent in today's new cultural language of technology and social media. He will help to bring my vision (the demonstration project/dissertation) to reality for all to see via technology. Deja Jowanna Angela Jenkins is my goddaughter. She is [18 years old, in her first year of college. At the time of the project, she was an honor roll

student at Nellie Thornton High School. She was a recipient of Judge Judy's scholarship to help her with college, after being in the mentoring program. Deja represented the perspectives of the youth (who are the future generation) in this project. I raised her for the first four years of her life, even though I was caught in the grips of addiction. She has witnessed firsthand God's transformative power in my life. Dr. Howard Fogel (Ph. D. CASAC) is an Educational Director at the Center for Addiction Studies and Research. He brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise from the New York State OASAS (Offices Alcohol, Substance Abuse Services). Dr. Fogel was one of my former professors while I did my undergraduate work in psychology. He has stated candidly his willingness to help me in this project, in any way that he can. The Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore [now 99th bishop in succession of the A.M.E. Zion Church] is on my team, he is my pastor, my father in ministry, and the man of God – that God chose to use to help liberate and transform my life. He is the spiritual overseer of the project. Without a doubt, our team is a divinely strong team that has been put together by God before the foundation of the world for God's purpose.

Collectively, the team should be congratulated for the professional and proficient way in which they allowed God to use them in assisting me to fulfill one of God's purposes for my life. The team, all with gifts and talents in the areas of my weaknesses, worked cohesively to assure that I (we) followed the timeline that was set forth in my Demonstration Project Proposal. I (we), therefore, worked in a systematic and methodical manner to reach all expected deadlines for each aspect of the project. As the minister and student leading the project, I intentionally structured each meeting to have incorporated within it a foundation of prayer (opening and closing), Scripture, and

elements of encouragement. I introduced this structure, as a foundation, a spiritual way to begin our dialogue of diverse brainstorming, administration, business organization and planning at each of our monthly meetings. As anticipated, it went very well since we allowed the presence of God to be in charge. In particular, there were a total of 13 Site Team meetings held before the workshop took place on March 30, 2012. Minutes were taken at each monthly meeting by Site Team member Joan Shedlovsky, who agreed to be my business assistant on the team at the beginning of the project. In addition to these monthly meetings, the team also engaged in constant communication via e-mails, as well as through telephone calls to each other and others who would assist us in the project.

Promotional Team

Productively, it was critical to the project's success that a Promotional Team was created. Each member on the team was put on my heart by God to be a part of the project. The members chosen to be on this team are, before anything else, three of my sisters in Christ. They are also students of mine in a religious education (small group) class that I teach at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. These women are also successful in their professional careers. Sutana Goldson, a broker's assistant in the financial district...and a somewhat "tech savvy" individual who was to serve in "social media" by helping to develop and market the project through Facebook and Twitter. Wendy Bratcher, an executive assistant in the financial world, would handle "community outreach" and menus for each fellowship gatherings. Arlene Kelley, Director of Operations for the City of New York, agreed to help the team with "organization" as needed.

Informatively, the Promo Team had two meetings (one on February 29th and the other on March 7th of 2012). At the meeting on February 29th, the team met in the small dining room at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. At this first meeting, the team formulated several thoughts on how we would translate the “message” to the “masses.” It was important for us to find ways to express what this project wanted to convey to the culture, Church, congregation, and the community. Parenthetically, it was imperative that we as a team followed the Goals and Strategies set out in my Plan of Implementation in the Demonstration Project Proposal. We also had to keep in mind that although Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church was the setting at which the project was to take place, the church had clear policies, procedures, and protocol set in place that our team needed to take into account that would govern how we would both implement and promote the project. Also for us to consider as we attempted to proceed with our work, was the sensitive issue of a current Recovery Ministry at the church, which was “revamping” its strategies. Due to the “sincere mission” that we faced on God’s behalf coupled with the fact that we had “skilled talent” on the team enabled to work within the parameters that were stipulated by the church.

Inclusive, at our first meeting, assignments were given to each team member as to who would be responsible for completing which task. Entrepreneur Darin Kent of *Jesus Piece Productions* (a gifted videographer who is employed by Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church) agreed to meet with the Promo Team and offer assistance regarding social media. At the initial meeting, it was also suggested that “catchy phrases” for the project be thought of by our members and brought back to our next meeting. The most appropriate “catchy phrase” selected would be the theme of the project. Darin Kent

informed us that the phrase should be short and succinct, not having too many words. He stated the phrase needed to be quick and make a connection with the concept. The Promo Team in their commitment to the project brainstormed and sent e-mails to me throughout that next week. (See Appendix F, “Catchy Phrases”) The second meeting took place on March 7, 2012, was held in room #202 at Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church. The team members brought back their suggestions. Out of the list of “catchy phrases” the name “Progression in Session” (which I suggested) was selected for the 12-week session course. It was agreed that this name would go on Facebook, flyers, and all promo materials.

Important to my Dissertation, “*Stages and Phases of Transformation*” would be the trademark name of my Doctoral Project (as it describes my project and my life in metaphorical dimensions of the butterfly). I informed the team that “*Stages and Phases of Transformation*” is to always be placed in the front of “Progression in Session.” Darin Kent was very instrumental in helping the team to fill out the required Media Request form (a required document of the church) that was submitted (and re-submitted) from our team, to the church administration for approval. (See Appendix G, Media Request Form) This process happened several times until everything was acceptable by both the church and our team.

Metamorphosis Image Selection to Promote Project

Regarding the selection of the “image” of the stages and phases of the metamorphosis of the butterfly, which symbolizes transformation for the project, the inspiration occurred when I first saw a picture of it hanging on the wall in my professor’s (Dr. Wanda Lundy) office. By way of metaphor, “the image” (a photograph taken by

Gordie Corbin) told my story exactly. I asked Dr. Lundy to send me a copy of the picture via e-mail, to which she agreed. After not receiving it in time for the team's first meeting (March 29, 2012), members of the Promo Team went online to (Monarch butterfly) and retrieved "the image" (See Appendix H, Natures-Miracle Butterfly). The Promo Team requested on the required form from Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church that this image of nature's miracle be used for the "***Stages and Phases of Transformation***" project.

As our process of meeting went forward, the Promo Team met for the first time with the Site Team for a joint meeting at Applebee's in New Rochelle, N.Y., to bridge ideas regarding the project. This was the only such time the two teams officially met together. This meeting took place on March 24, 2012.

Social Media Development

Essentially, it was the gifted and talented Darin Kent on the team (who I will refer to as DK in the rest of this document) who created an Angela Ryan Facebook page at the joint team meeting. I must admit that this technical way of promoting and communicating the project was very new, different, challenging, and uncomfortable for me. To add, the teams stretched me and helped me to develop my social media skills. Within my Demonstration Project Proposal, I made a commitment to use Facebook to promote the project, and although I had some apprehensions and misgivings in the beginning (and even was to the point several times to shut it down) I realized that it was a valuable asset to the project. I needed to overcome my technical shyness. Site Team Member Joan Shedlovsky also grew in technology skills by joining Facebook. Prior to this meeting, Sutana Goldson had created a separate Facebook and Twitter account for

“Progression in Session” that would generate interested persons and invite them to the workshop. In order to develop these accounts and get me on board with the entire idea it involved, there was much persuasion from the team about the benefits that technology would have in enhancing the project.

“Flyer” for Marketing

Concerning the material that would advertise, promote, and market the workshop a “flyer” was created by the Promo Team using the image of the metamorphosis of the butterfly. We used this image as the entire background for the flyer. (See Appendix I, Flyer). Since Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church was the setting where the workshop was to take place, the church’s logo was added to the flyer. We also included the date, time, and details of the event and sent it to the church administration for approval. Notably, part of the parameters that the Site Team had to work around was that the current Recovery Ministry had to sponsor the project (including workshop and classes). Therefore, the current Recovery Ministry leader’s name was added to the flyer by the church and sent back to our team. We wanted to get the flyers out to the community as soon as possible as the workshop was nearing. The flyer was approved on March 19, 2012. Once approved, however, the church’s outside printing source seemed to have a problem with printing the requested image on the flyer. The administration offered to print another metamorphosis image for us. However, the team and I were absolutely sure that the image we had chosen was what we had decided and wanted for the project. Therefore, in support of God’s project, several members of the Promo and Site Teams agreed to print the flyers. In this way, we would have availability of our “hands on” marketing strategies. Promo Team member Arlene Kelley printed 1,000

copies and brought them to the team, Joan Shedlovsky and Wendy Bratcher also printed copies to contribute toward the effort. This has been God's project from the very beginning. God has sent so many people who are willing to do God's work, to serve and assist me with this God's project. Many individuals have helped without asking for a fee.

I must offer a special thanks to Dr. Wanda Lundy for reminding our team to insert Gordie Corbin's name on our flyers. Initially, we had inadvertently omitted it. Our team was delayed in putting her name on the flyers, program booklet, and on Facebook.

Subsequently, her name was put on the flyer on the Facebook page by our technical staff, and all flyers and other materials. However, the spirit and integrity in which we, the team, have always conducted ourselves in doing this project is one where this project glorifies God. I contacted Gordie Corbin by e-mail on September 13, 2012, to thank her for allowing her image to be used in this project. After several e-mails, she was glad that we chose her image to be a part of the project. Our first opportunity came to distribute flyers after the joint meeting (and lunch) that our teams had on March 24, 2012. The members of the Promo Team (and one of my class members from my church, Sandra Campbell) and I hit the streets to do "community outreach." We passed out flyers to as many people as we saw. Frankly, the flyer was a dynamic marketing tool for the project.

Awareness Video

Essential to the promotion of the workshop was the creation of an Awareness video. (See Appendix J, Awareness Video) This video would share convincing statistics, the compelling story of my testimony, and comments from the respondents who were a part of my research study. The team planned to show a trailer of the video before the workshop. We also planned to show it at all three of our Sunday church service, during

the announcements portion of the service. The filming was originally scheduled to take place on February 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7. However, due to the passing of videographers Darin Kent's father, it was necessary for us to push filming back. Quite naturally, our entire team came together to support DK during this time. Our team encouraged him through e-mail and several of us attended the home going services held at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. Due to both the season of bereavement and the sensitive nature, the actual filming for the Awareness Video took place on February 8, 9, and 11 of 2012. Informatively, on February 8, DK and I met at two sites located in Mt. Vernon: The Mount Vernon Hospital Methadone Maintenance Clinic and St. John's Riverside Hospital Archway Clinic.

Please consider this brief background about the significance of both sites. Regarding Archway Clinic, as I stated earlier, I was asked by the director, Ms. Elaine Bryant, to come and bring a *spiritual dynamic* to their program. During the first six months that I taught there, there was "consistent attendance, client participation (both verbal and by writing), continual observed spiritual growth of clients, as well as several comments to me stating appreciation for what was being taught and for my presence at the center." Some of the individuals in the spirituality group were instrumental in helping me to gather critical research so that I was able to gage the spiritual growth of persons in recovery in a secular treatment facility. Naturally, this research was done, after students signed consent forms, and filled out pre and-post questionnaires. For this reason, I asked if any would like to be a part of the Awareness Video. Several did, and their participation was completely voluntary in the video. On January 27, 2012, I developed questions that would inspire the students to share their thoughts about the Spirituality

group. I asked those who were videotaped five questions of Qualitative Research. The questions were: Can you describe in what specific ways the spirituality group has helped you in your recovery process? How can programs such as these benefit the community? How would you feel about participating in a similar program if it was offered at a local church? How did the Spirituality group benefit you differently from other support groups? In what ways has the spirituality group motivated you to attain your future goals? Each person who was videoed, in answering the above questions shared his or her thoughts on what they received from having a spirituality (holistic) group being taught. Ms. Bryant is one of the people God is using to help me fulfill His purpose. She has been completely supportive of all aspects of this entire project including overseeing that the filming was done appropriately. To respect the confidentiality of clients, all of the interviewing and videotaping took place outside of the Archway building (filming was done completely off the premises). Moreover, all interviewing and videotaping took place on the clients' own time (either during their break, or after the program was over). Each person who participated was extremely willing to sign the consent form for this portion of the project as well. They genuinely wanted to support my academic endeavors, and also wanted to be a part of the project.

Regarding filming at the Mount Vernon Hospital Methadone Clinic, due to confidentiality issues, filming was unable to take place on site. Therefore, my videographer and I were able to re-chart (without capturing the building) my former caterpillar-type life, filming the miserable steps that I was forced to take day after day for a number of years. The importance of my extending my research to include those who attend the clinic was to be able to give those who are in methadone treatment hope. I also

wanted to include their voices in the project. I wanted to reach those who may want to have spirituality and education enhance their means of treatment. For purposes of helping to stimulate their answers while being videotaped I drafted the following

Qualitative Research Questions: How can a program based on *spirituality & education* be of benefit to you at this time in your life? Can you share your feelings about what the church has specifically done to help you in your recovery efforts not having outside support groups at the church have you ever reached out to the church? (Be specific), Describe what it would mean to you to attend a holistic program of this nature at a local church in the community. How do you feel a program like this would impact the community? What would be the impact on your life if you attended and received a certificate after completion of this type of program? Not everybody ends his/her treatment successfully, and is able to live a productive a life. To God be the glory, I was able to successfully end treatment in 1999. After receiving certificates to receive my CASAC-T, God allowed me to practice internship at the very same clinic where I used to be a client. This is the same clinic where I used to have to arrive by a certain time every day. It is where I had to stand on long lines (most of the times) to drink from the cup, but now God is using me as an example to give back to the community. Praise be to God, now the cup from which I drink is the blood of Jesus Christ at Holy Communion. This in itself is transformation.

My former counselor, Pam Wainaina, has been very supportive of my efforts since the beginning this project. She watched my growth over the years and has extended much encouragement to me. Several months before the program started, I referred her to Dr. Howard Fogel so that she could begin pursuit of her CASAC, which she did not

currently possess this certificate. She was accepted into his program and has successfully completed the course. She now has her CASAC-T, which makes her more marketable in the field of addiction. When considering the target audience for the class, I opened it up to people in recovery as well as to those in the field of addiction. I did this so that they could see that spirituality and education is a viable means of treatment. Pam came and took the “Progression in Session” class. Since she had walked many years of the journey with me, until I left the methadone clinic, I wanted to give her a certificate of completion (along with the other students) for her support in my project. To witness what has happened to both of us on our journey is the power of true transformation. As Joan Shedlovsky, my business assistant, shared, “The student became the teacher.” The trailer of visual video contents was shown at all three services at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church before the workshop, which took place on March 30, 2012.

The Elements of the Workshop Forms

It was necessary that the Site Team develop several essential forms and professional documents that would be required and used as part of the research at the workshop. My business assistant, Joan Shedlovsky, and I were mainly responsible for creating these forms. She created, and I edited and approved. In the following section you will read the context in which the forms were used.

Regarding the inclusivity of the next generation, I took the advice of Dr. Lundy, and made sure that a teenager was on my Site Team. The purpose of having a teen on the team was to gage the perspectives of the youths regarding drugs and alcohol. The research would be gathered at one of the local high schools in the community of Mt. Vernon. It was, therefore, necessary for our team to put together a “youth survey” (an

instrument) to gage the findings of our quantitative research; we gave the sole responsibility of developing the questions for that survey to the teenager on the team. The first set of questions were developed and submitted to the Site Team for review and editing by teen Deja Jenkins (who I will refer to by her first name throughout the remainder of this document) on October 25, 2012. The questions that Deja submitted to the team were reviewed via e-mail, as well as edited at Site Team meetings.

Research at Nellie Thornton High School

The following questions were sent out for final distribution to the principal of Nellie Thornton High School, Mrs. Sharon Bradley, on January 30, 2012. These questions (youth survey) would help us to gather Quantitative Research: What is the number one reason that teens try drugs alcohol? Where and how do teens first obtain alcohol and or drugs? Why do they continue to use these substances? What kinds of alcohol/ and or drugs have you ever tried? Have you used these drugs in the last 30 days? Have you used drugs over the last year? Have you tried alcohol in the last 30 days?: Have you tried alcohol in the past year?: Do your parents or guardians abuse alcohol/and or drugs?:

Throughout February 2012, there were several e-mails sent between Deja and the rest of our Site Team regarding the youth survey. Subsequently, on February 28, 2012, a meeting was scheduled to occur on March 1, 2012 (at 12:00 p.m.), with Mrs. Sharon Bradley, Deja, and me to discuss the research that I was seeking to do at Nellie Thornton High School. The meeting on March 1, 2012, went very well. I received an enormous amount of support from Mrs. Bradley regarding the project. She agreed to allow anonymous questionnaires to be distributed to the students assuring that no student

signature be attached. The decision was made to have the questionnaires distributed to the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. In particular, the Health and Social Studies classes would be sure to be included in the research. The following table describes the outcome of the research:

Table 1: Pre-Post Student Evaluation Forms

	<u>Pre-Test Scores</u>	<u>Post-Test Scores</u>
Mean	69.18	69.00
SD	2.40	1.84
N	11	14

On the morning of March 5, 2012 (the same day that survey questionnaires were distributed at the school), Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall (my advisor) was very helpful in suggesting to me the following information. His advice was that any time research is done in any institution or facility, a formal letter needs to be written on behalf of the researcher. Before venturing to the school that day, I drafted a letter to do research in the academic institution. As a matter of ethics, I was careful to hand the letter to the principal (Mrs. Bradley) before she received the questionnaires. I found this bit of information from Dr. Cohall to be extremely helpful. The team also followed up with a formal letter of thanks to Mrs. Bradley, teachers, and students.

After the surveys were collected from the students, Site Team member Mr. David Bradley (gifted with numbers) and I met with Deja twice (once at Panera Bread in Co-op City in the Bronx, and once at Starbucks in Mt. Vernon) to analyze the data that had been given. The process we engaged in involved counting all the 9, 10, 11 and 12 grade responses and breaking them down into categories. Mr. David Bradley would be

instrumental in assisting Deja with a presentation worksheet that was used in conjunction with the PowerPoint slide show at the workshop described below. (See Appendix K, PowerPoint Presentation Youth Survey) In order for me to glean an understanding of the amount of data that individuals would learn during the Spirituality & Education Addiction Workshop, it was necessary for the development, design, and use of a scale known as Pre and Post Questionnaires. (See Appendix L, Workshop Questionnaire) This instrument would gage and assess knowledge both before and after the workshop. On March 10, 2012, Joan Shedlovsky and I began e-mail correspondence with Dr. Howard Fogel, the Site Team member with the most expertise in his professional field of study to obtain assistance with the pre- and post-questionnaires. He was willing to assist us in any way he could. Dr. Fogel offered excellent suggestions to the team via e-mail that enabled us to structure a questionnaire for the workshop. The questionnaire was finalized on March 27, 2012.

In addition, registration forms for the workshop were developed and designed for all participants to sign if they had intentions on taking the 12-session course. Joan Shedlovsky designed and I approved the forms. (See Appendix M, Registration Form) Also, a program booklet was designed that had Greater Centennial's church logo, pastor's name, each speaker's name, credentials and relationship to the visionary of the project on it. Furthermore, folders were given out at the workshop. Labels were created with the metamorphosis of the butterfly and affixed onto each folder.

Attendance Sheets were designed to ascertain the number of individuals who attended the workshop. These attendance sheets were also useful in my building relationships and nurturing individuals through the creation of a data base, based on the

information attendance sheets. The data base included names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Joan was able to communicate to all individuals on my behalf, based on the information gathered.

I was led by the Spirit of God to have tee-shirts made for our Site and Promo Teams to wear at the workshop. All of the team members had worked so hard to get everything just right for the project. It was originally planned that everyone would wear tee-shirts. However, after thinking through the costs, the team decided that only the panelists, who were to speak at the workshop, would wear the shirts. I moved quickly, and asked one of the members of our church (Bro. David Drummond, who owns his own business of screen printing and embroidering) to create an image of the metamorphosis of the butterfly and have our message put on the shirts. Promo Team member Wendy Bratcher was a blessing to the panelist by purchasing all the shirts.

Regarding the PowerPoint presentation, on the afternoon of March 30, 2012, Mr. Bradley and I worked together to craft a PowerPoint presentation that would enhance each presenter's material in a visual way. We synthesized the panelist material that had been sent to us via e-mail. Mr. Bradley has a great creative use of, and knowledge of computer skills. I contributed my thoughts on various aspects. The PowerPoint presentations heightened each speaker's message tremendously.

Addiction Spirituality Workshop

The actual workshop took place on March 30, 2012, at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church and was held in the Fellowship Hall of the church. The "Progression in Session" team planned for the workshop to take place for two hours, between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. However, due to the synergistic effect of both information and inspiration

flowing through the atmosphere, and the great fellowship orchestrated by the Holy Spirit the workshop didn't end until between 9:30-9:45 p.m.

As a result of our Promo's Team's outreach efforts, 55 people attended the workshop that evening. (See Appendix N, Sign-In Sheet Workshop March 30) We had a diverse genre of individuals in attendance. Their differences were based on age (youth to seniors), ethnic background and religious affiliation (Christian, Muslim and Jewish) When considering diversity, "We all should know diversity makes for a rich tapestry and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter their color."¹²⁵ Considering the many perspectives of diversity at the workshop, the following should be noted. First, I am grateful for my family's support. Their presence at the workshop was very special to me. My brother and sisters are Muslim. Based on their faith, they normally worship at the Mosque, or Masjid, and do not make a practice of entering the church. However, with them being in support of their sister's academic and spiritual pursuits in this project love took over and dismantled traditional barriers.

Furthermore, one of my Site Team members (and also presenter on the panel) is a devout Jew. Due to Dr. Howard Fogel keeping Sabbath and other holidays, on several occasions our team has had to accommodate our meetings around him. The evening of the workshop, he made a special sacrifice to be in attendance, which everyone on the team appreciated. Diversity was also seen in the workshop by those who made up the panel (based on gender, age, faith). Inclusion is so important, and all groups should be

¹²⁵ Maya Angelou, Diversity Quotes, www.thinkexist.com/quotations/diversity (Accessed December 29, 2012).

made to feel welcome and a part of the setting. In my opinion, this mixture led to a hospitable and ecumenical atmosphere.¹²⁶

Next, I am grateful to Rev. Keisha Agard, the Minister of Youth at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, for bringing a significant number of youth from our church to the workshop that evening to gain knowledge about a subject that plagues a plethora of people in our urban communities. “It is a shocking reality that so many of our homeless youth quickly become trapped by drug peddlers and pimps...In our day, homeless youth and teens are preyed upon due to our ignorance and lack of concern.”¹²⁷ It was good for Greater Centennial’s youth to see one of their peers being a part of a Doctoral project (by Deja) reporting on the youth survey that was done at a local High school in their community. This educational endeavor could inspire them to one day do the same type of effort.

Moving on, upon entering the Fellowship Hall, individuals were greeted and asked to proceed to the registration desk (supervised by the Promo Team). I made sure that there was a welcoming spirit by myself and my team members. We also created a spirit of hospitality by serving food (understanding that many would be coming directly from work and could use a meal) and playing inviting music. As individuals entered they were provided with a folder (containing a registration form, a pre-and post-questionnaires, pen, pad, program booklet and syllabus for the 12-session course (See Appendix O, Program Booklet, Syllabus and Curriculum) Also, individuals were asked to complete a pre-workshop questionnaire and then after the panel presentations,

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Duane Grady, *Helping the Homeless: God's Word in Action* (Elgin, Illinois: Brethren Press, 1988), 32.

attendees were asked to complete a post-workshop questionnaire. The same questions were asked on the form to determine what attendees learned.

Naturally, the workshop opened with Scripture and prayer. As a way of having inclusion and support of the current Recovery Ministry, I asked that opening remarks would be made by the leader of Greater Centennial's Recovery Ministry, Sis. Marilyn Nelson. I also gave her the opportunity to be one of the panelists to share at the event. However, she declined. After she made brief remarks and introduced me, I gave a brief overview of the presenters who would be speaking. Deja Jenkins would provide the youth perspective on alcohol and drugs. Dr. Howard Fogel would discuss many aspects of addiction. Ms. Elaine Bryant, who was gracious enough to accept the offer to speak two days before the workshop, would talk about outpatient programs. PowerPoint accompanied all presentations, with the exception of Ms. Bryant. After these presentations, an Awareness Video (produced by Site Team member Darin Kent) was shown. The video was in every way compelling, comprehensive, and convincing. It highlighted the path that I took when leaving my past horrible and incorrigible life. It further showed my passion to help "the least of these" through this project. After the video was shown, I concluded the workshop as the last speaker. I delivered a detailed presentation on the role of the synchronicity of education and spirituality in treating addiction in church-based settings. With passion, I introduced to those in attendance an innovative option for the treatment of addiction. The primary points I discussed were innovation, transformation, and destination.

As I was ending my presentation, I was led by the Spirit of God to make an altar call. I called for any in the workshop who may have been going through, any struggle,

trial, or challenge and wanted to receive a breakthrough to come and receive prayer. I stressed that their issue did not necessarily have to center on drug addiction. Around 10 people came up to receive and received a breakthrough. The formal part of the program ended with the 10 of us holding hands while I led in a powerful prayer. Afterwards, there was fellowship among all participants. This was a great time to see that diversity really means sameness. Many individuals let me know their positive thoughts about the workshop. "In summary, the Workshop was a very successful event, educating attendees about addiction and the role of education and spirituality."¹²⁸ God truly got all the glory.

Fifteen people registered to take the 12-session course the night of the workshop.

Quantitative Research Done at Workshop

In order for me to glean an understanding of the amount of data that individuals would learn during the Spirituality & Education Addiction Workshop, it was necessary for the development, design, and use of a scale known as pre and post questionnaires. This instrument would gage and assess knowledge both before and after the workshop.

Before the workshop began, participants were given a 10- question multi-choice questionnaire to fill out. The questions were based on the content of the material that was presented at the workshop that evening. The first three questions were taken from the youth survey presenter's presentation. Those questions were, In the recent survey conducted with Thornton High School students, the number-one reason why teens first tried alcohol or drugs was? What percentage of Thornton High School students stated that they used alcohol or other drugs? What percentage of Thornton High School students stated that it was either somewhat hard, hard or very hard to become addicted to

¹²⁸ Ibid.

alcohol or drugs? The next three questions were derived from Dr. Howard Fogel, they were: Approximately how many people in the United States suffer from some form of addiction? Approximately how many of those who suffer from addiction are not currently seeking treatment for their addiction? State the two groups that are currently underserved in substance-abuse treatment facilities in the United States? The last four questions were from my presentation. They were, What percentage of individuals in Mt. Vernon currently seeks treatment for addiction in a church program? Out of Mt. Vernon's largest churches, how many have Recovery Ministries providing holistic treatment (a wholeness approach) for persons in recovery? The model being proposed for the "Progression in Session" classes (which will start in April here at the church) will combine which of the two following elements? Transformation refers to: (multiple choice answers given).

Informatively, the WQ was given to workshop participants prior to the workshop presentations, and once again at the conclusion of the panel presentation. The maximum possible score was 100. The minimum was 0. Results: The mean score on the WQ that participants filled out prior to the presentation was 40.8 %. Thirty-five people filled out the WQ. The mean score on the post WQ that individuals took following the workshop presentation was 66.1%. There were 39 people who filled out the post WQ. To summarize briefly, the difference between pre-WQ score and post-WQ score was significant as is evident in the following Table.

Table 2: Pre-Post Workshop Questionnaire Scores

	<u>Pre-Test Scores</u>	<u>Post-Test Scores</u>
Mean	40.86	66.16
SD	18.53	23.69
N	35	39

“Progression in Session” Twelve-Session Course

As with everything else in the project, preparation was essential for the actual course. Therefore, the underpinning and development for the 12-session course was extensive by way of planning. The program began on April 13, 2012, at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. Once again our team knew the importance of a “flyer” being created for purposes of the promotion of the classes. Based on limited time, we used the same image for the flyer, but logically changed the data to reflect the dates that the classes were to begin as well as the location where classes would be held. (See Appendix P, Flyer for 12-Session Course) As the individual with the vision, it was my responsibility to develop the “syllabus” as well as the “curriculum.” I designed the syllabus to reflect a detailed description of the class, course objective, and what students could expect at completion of the course. I also included my contact information for students, in case they needed to reach me for any reason and times that the class would meet. Regarding the “curriculum,” I listed in thematic sequence every weekly topic that the course would cover. Before they were used in the program, both the syllabus and curriculum went through an approval stage with my Site Team members.

In addition, I was responsible for creating lesson plans. I created these plans (as the Holy Spirit gave me direction) as an effective means for students to have guidance in

following along with me in each class. Importantly, I was intentional about including on the lesson plan a Scripture (that was specific to the day's lesson) and the component of prayer (to be read by a selected student in the class). This structure, like with my Site Team meetings, kept the foundation of the "Progression in Session" classes spiritual in nature. Each lesson plan also included the use of several quotes by renowned authors related to the theme of the lesson. Primarily, I retrieved these quotes from the Internet.¹²⁹ As a part of class participation, students volunteered to read the quotes and would express why they liked the one they had read, or make a comment about their favorite author of a quote. I chose to use quotes as a means to enhance and heighten the educational aspect of the class.

Naturally, the class format changed each week based on the content of each lesson. The query to opine included on each lesson was an idea that I adopted from Rick Warren's book *A Purpose Driven Life*. In a similar way, each query that I asked in my class was asked to stimulate thought-provoking responses from students. Moreover, each question was read from the lesson sheet and answered at the close of each session by one student. Inclusively, a "session book" was included on each lesson plan. The designated book was an integral part of the lesson that I taught students. I also encouraged the book to be a suggested reading to the students in their private lives, and expressed the value of building a personal library. In addition, weaved into my lessons, I incorporated "vocabulary building." I did this by teaching students a "key word" each week. I encouraged the students to use this "new word" during the week, and to teach the "new word" to someone else.

¹²⁹ African American Quotes, <http://africanamericanquotes.org/education.html> (Accessed April-June 2012).

In addition, as part of the quantitative research methodology I was doing, I designed an in-class assignment to determine spiritual growth, and learning of the students. I distributed this assignment to the students three times over the course of the class (in the beginning, in the middle, and end). The assignment encompassed three areas of focus. Students were to describe their spirituality, their recovery status, and education. (See Appendix Q, In-class Assignment).

Part of my teaching strategy was to have students to break up into small groups (break-out sessions). This was an opportunity for them to work among themselves, dig into the text, spiritually problem solve, share ideas, formulate definitions of words, and arrive at solutions. At the end of these breakout sessions, a representative from each group would come to the front and write the responses gathered on the board, and share the perspective of that group with the class. During the times that each group was engaging, I took the position of the observer. Clearly, I was able to see intelligence at work.

With my having both the educational and practical knowledge (experience) in psychology, it allowed me to understand when teaching the “Progression in Session” class that teaching involves so much more than shoveling information to people. Current epistemological methodologies that are impactful in classroom settings are seen when *all* the voices at the table are heard. Room should always be made for participatory sharing. I comprehend, more than anything else that the people I teach are especially important they are God’s children. Individuals, come to class, as they do often to counseling, with lots of things on their minds. In order for teachers to be effective, they have to be sensitive to this reality.

Arguably,

There is something peculiarly compelling about the central hypothesis of the client-centered approach, and the individual who comes to rely upon this hypothesis in...therapeutic work finds almost inevitably that [one] is driven to experiment with it in other types of activity. If, in therapy, it is possible to rely upon the capacity of the [clients] to deal constructively with life situations and if the therapist's aim is best directed toward releasing that capacity, then why not apply this hypothesis and method in teaching? If the creation of an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding, and respect is the most effective basis for facilitating the learning called therapy, then might it not be the basis for the learning, which is called education?" If the outcome to this approach to therapy is [people] who [are] not only better informed in regard to [themselves], but people who are better able to guide themselves intelligently in new situations, might a similar outcome be hoped for in education? It is questions of this sort which plagues the counselor who is a teacher.¹³⁰

Teaching is one thing, the methodology or approach that guarantees that learning takes place is another. Note, "If the aim of education is to produce well informed technicians who will become completely amenable to carrying out all orders of constituted authority without questioning, then the method ...is highly inappropriate."¹³¹

Understanding this, the type of educational goal that I presented to the adult students who took the, "Progression" in Session" class was one of "democratic education."¹³² It was in accordance with student-centered teaching.¹³³

It has been stated,

The goal of democratic education is to assist students to become individuals who are able to take self-initiated action and to be responsible for those actions; [students] who are capable of intelligent choice and self- direction; [students] who are critical learners, able to evaluate contributions made by others; [students] who have acquired knowledge relevant to the solution of problems; [students] who even more importantly, are able to adapt flexibly and intelligently to new problem

¹³⁰ Carl Rogers, PhD., *Client-Centered Therapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951), 384.

¹³¹ Ibid., 387.

¹³² Ibid., 387.

¹³³ Ibid., 387.

situations; [students] who work not for the approval of others, but in terms of their own socialized purposes.¹³⁴

Parker J. Palmer, a “highly respected writer, lecturer, teacher, and activist,”¹³⁵ states,

The subjects we teach are as large and complex as life, so our knowledge of them is always flawed and partial. No matter how much we devote ourselves to reading and research, teaching requires a command of content that always eludes our grasp. Second, the students we teach are larger than life and even more complex. To see them clearly and see them whole, and respond to them wisely in the moment, requires a fusion of Freud and Solomon that few of us achieve.¹³⁶

In addition to academic empowerment, my theological educational background and many years of being under the tutelage of Pastor W. Darin Moore (learning from his exemplary preaching and teaching) equipped me to be able to teach the class from a spiritual perspective. Most importantly, I am grateful to God for the gift of wisdom and knowledge, and the passion to love others enough to want to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. Essentially, we learned about God from each other.

Specifically, in order for me to get a sense of the students’ thoughts in a qualitative research manner, I distributed a take home essay. (See Appendix R, Take-Home Essay) The essay was not in any way designed to intimidate or to create a sense of fear for students. After all, my class was made up of multi-leveled intellectual beings. It was, however, a chance for them to express themselves. I kept in mind that many in the class had not been in school for a number of years. Therefore, I encouraged them to simply write from their hearts. For this assignment, I told students not to pay attention to

¹³⁴ Ibid., 387.

¹³⁵ Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher’s Life*, (San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass 1998), Back Cover.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 2.

spelling, verbs, adjectives, tenses, etc. The students were very eager to contribute in any way that they could to this project. I formulated the essay to have two parts. In answering part (a), the students were to give their suggestions for how the Church can better understand people in the Recovery process. In completing part (b), they were to state how the “Progression in Session” class helped them grow both spiritually and academically. Students were to be specific in their answers, which can be read in Chapter 6.

Fellowship

In a cordial way, it should be noted that each of the sessions included a banquet type repast for students (meals that were purchased by Wendy and the Promo Team). They included assorted beverages, cookies, muffins, and cakes that varied each week. The students found the treats to be festive, fun, and enjoyable and a way to provide energy for the hour and a half class. The snacks also created an atmosphere of fellowship after each meeting, as the students wanted to talk to one another and me about the lesson that was taught. We had light meals as we engaged in conversation.

Educational Symposium

An essential dynamic of the “Progression in Session” class was my planning an Educational Symposium that was held on July 6, 2012. It took place at the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church in the Fellowship Hall. This aspect of the project, too, took an enormous amount of preparation. Months in advance (May 10, 2012), I arranged for The College of New Rochelle’s, School of New Resources (in New Rochelle, New York) to work with me on this project. I asked Dr. Elena Bront, Campus Director, if

representatives could be sent to my class in the upcoming months on the night of the symposium.

For several reasons, I especially wanted this school to be the supporting institution that would discuss with the students the Bachelors and Masters levels of degrees. First and foremost, I am an alumna of the college. Secondly, as an adult student, who returned to school after taking a 27-year sabbatical, I experienced firsthand what it is like to receive a Liberal Arts education from this institution. Adults returning to this school are given a genuine opportunity by both the institution and its educators to achieve academic success. The College of New Rochelle is for adults who are 21 and older. Moreover, the scheduling and curriculum are designed to meet the needs of adult learners. Many classes are scheduled in the evening for those who work. Ever since graduating from the college in 2006, I have been an unofficial “recruiter” of many students to the school. I have a certain trust in the college that those who I refer will be given the same academic benefits that I was given. Therefore, they were an obvious choice of mine. Mr. Miguel Ramos and Ms. Casey DelliCarpini were subsequently chosen from the school to come and speak. Another important point of preparation for me to consider was, since my class had multi-level academic needs, I also needed to provide a speaker to address the skills students needed in order to obtain a GED certificate. Ms. Nancy Fitch, who is a spry 92-year old African American woman, and continues to serve in the local community at the Mount Vernon Public library, was selected to come for this purpose. Many telephone calls were made and lots of e-mails sent before the evening of the event. Also, a program booklet was designed (as mentioned elsewhere in this document) using the same image of the metamorphosis of

the butterfly that was used throughout the entire project. This time, however, the image was used as a program for this event. The program contained an overview of the speakers' brief bios, which can be seen below.

Importantly,

For 21 years, Ms. Nancy E. Fitch has served as the coordinator of the Literacy Volunteers Learning Center of Mt. Vernon. The Center is located in the Mt. Vernon Public Library (28 South First Avenue). Ms. Fitch's responsibilities include tutoring those who cannot read and write above a fifth-grade level. The program's purpose is to enhance reading comprehension and writing skills. In addition to tutoring, Ms. Fitch provides assistance in such as areas as finding employment, taking tests and getting a driver's license.¹³⁷

Informatively, "Mr. Miguel Ramos is the MS-Director of Graduate Admissions at The College of New Rochelle. He is responsible for the overall graduate admissions process from recruitment to student. Mr. Ramos manages the admission for the three divisions of the CNR graduate school: Education, Art Therapy/Communication Studies and Human Services."¹³⁸

Insightfully,

Ms. Casey DelliCarpini is the Administrative Assistant for Admissions at the School of New Resources of The College of New Rochelle. Her duties include working with incoming adult students who are in the process of making the decision to return to school. She provides support throughout the registration process. Her assistance continues as students proceed in their academic journeys. As a graduate of the School of New Resources, Ms. DelliCarpini is keenly aware of the apprehension and anxiety that non-traditional students experience as well as the necessity for higher education. Her goal is to address both concerns and allow adult students to 'own' their life experiences and then use them to their advantage in an academic setting.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Program Booklet Biography Designed for Educational Symposium, July 6, 2012.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

This Educational Symposium (Session 11) was the first, hands-on opportunity for the students to actually become stimulated to return to school. From an observational standpoint, the interest shown by the presenters toward the students was overwhelmingly positive. The symposium itself, inclusive of all the speakers were both informative and inspiring. (See Appendix S, Synopsis Session 11) In addition, for the students to be able to hear the personal stories of how several of the presenters returned to school themselves and had their lives transformed, made quite an impact on the students.

College Tour

The final session of the “Progression in Session” class (Session 12) concluded with a college tour to New York Theological Seminary on July 13, 2012. As with every other aspect of the project, the college tour took a significant amount of preparation and planning. As early as May 10, 2012, our team began communication with Dr. Cynthia Diaz, Student Affairs and Vocational Discernment, and Director, Resource Center for Women in Ministry, to confirm the academic caliber of the students from the “Progression in Session” class as well as the number of individuals that would be attending the college. In our e-mail correspondence, we expressed that students were Christian adults who deserved to further their education and perhaps New York Theological Seminary could provide the needed help. We wanted to hear about all scholastic opportunities, including the certificate program the school offered. Site Team member Bro. David Bradley, who is also the Business Manager at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, was able to secure the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church bus to transport the students to NYTS. There was a sign-up sheet sent around in the classes for the students to put their signature on if they wanted to attend the tour. Emails were

also sent to students well in advance to remind them about both the educational symposium and the college tour.

This group college tour was an idea that I thought of early on in the project. Even though some students may not have wanted to pursue a theological path, or had a call to “divinity,” the exposure to a theological college tour would give them an opportunity to re-stimulate their academic journey. Many of the students had not attended any school in a number of years. It was previously arranged that the class arrive at the church early enough to have a brief fellowship outside, while waiting for fellow students to arrive. I am very grateful for Greater Centennial’s Church bus (car and limousine) driver, Bro. James Smith, for having the church bus there for the students on time.

Our group left at 6:45 p.m. The church bus was full that evening as most “Progression in Session” students took the Greater Centennial AME Zion Church bus to NYTS.” As the class rode on the bus to New York Theological Seminary, it actually became our Session 12. The bus ride/class began with a word of prayer by Pastor Lynne Middleton. She is the pastor of the “Faithful Word Ministries.” I have known Pastor Middleton for many, many years. We graduated from high school in the same year (1974). She was very interested in learning what New York Theological Seminary had to offer regarding the Doctorate of Ministry degree. Pastor Middleton did not take the “Progression in Session” class. However, she was a guest on the tour. After she prayed, I used this time as an opportunity to review and overview the entire class with students. I asked several questions regarding what they had learned over the course. I wanted to see how they would respond impromptu (without their notes in front of them). Their random responses were echoed out, I remember “knowledge,” I should always go through “the

narrow gate,” “Wisdom” is a woman, God’s has a “purpose” for my life, and “God wants intimacy with me.” Various quotes and Scriptures were also mentioned. I also asked students, “What was the most difficult thing about the class?” Many of them spurted out the answer, “change” and “Attending class every Friday.”¹⁴⁰ However, many students were glad they “stayed committed.” One student, Robin Tomlin, stated that she had, “no idea when she started ‘Progression in Session’ that she would wind up registering to begin college in the fall.”¹⁴¹ Most of the students felt as though they had grown closer to God (in spirituality). The students then talked about the challenges of writing the take-home essay. Many students admitted not writing an essay in a long time. Traffic was great, Bro. Smith drove well, and we arrived at NYTS on time.

Informatively, “Dr. Cynthia Diaz, Director, Student Affairs and Vocational Discernment, and Director, Resource Center for Women in Ministry, welcomed everyone in the lobby and then escorted the group to a conference center on the fifth floor”¹⁴² This was a special time for everyone in the class as the protocol for gaining access into the building is to sign in and get stickers of identification making it an official tour. There was excitement in the air as the students gathered together around the board room table. After taking our seats, Dr. Diaz was thorough in sharing with the class the broad spectrum of course material that NYTS has to offer in all their degree and certificate programs. I then had a moment to “address the students, saying that you never know what God will do in your lives. As students, you should have a range of expectations and

¹⁴⁰ Joan Shedlovsky, Synopsis Session 11, July 6, 2012.

¹⁴¹ Robin Tomlin, Bus Trip Conversation, July 13, 2012.

¹⁴² Ibid.

it's time [for you] to move forward.”¹⁴³ Dr. Diaz then made the students feel comfortable by asking “all participants to introduce themselves, to state what type of degree(s) they have and [asked] what were their future aspirations (and how, if anyway could NYTS play a role in that future). There were a variety of thought-provoking responses, including the following. Some are pursuing GEDs, some have Associate’s or Bachelor’s Degrees, while others have Master’s Degrees. One holds a degree in nursing. As the excitement from being in this setting was overtaking the students, the following comments were made: “Education is empowering,”¹⁴⁴ “Education is needed in order to do God’s will,”¹⁴⁵ [Individual’s] “can’t just exist – [Individual’s] needs to live according to God’s purpose.”¹⁴⁶ In a passionate way, various students also shared with Dr. Diaz that they had “Interest in drug counseling,”¹⁴⁷ “Interest in forensic science,”¹⁴⁸ “Pursuing a degree in counseling and psychology to assist women in jail and in abusive situations,”¹⁴⁹ “Working at the Mt. Vernon Board of Education,”¹⁵⁰ “Working with children (as a behavior therapist),”¹⁵¹ “Working in daycare,”¹⁵² and “Working in a Sunday school.” Some students were transparent by stating that they “fear going back to

¹⁴³ Joan Shedlovsky, 7/13/2012.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

school.”¹⁵³ The students were very appreciative for being able to come to the college for this dialogue.

As taken in notes from business assistant, Joan Shedlovsky:

Dr. Diaz then said that it was not an accident that we were all at NYTS for Progression in Session’s last class. We were all gathered for a purpose. Dr. Diaz offered the students the opportunity to audit classes and she welcomed everyone to contact her if there were questions or more information about NYTS. Dr. Diaz then spoke about her background. In 2003 at the age of 47 (March 25, 2003), she was called by God and started seminary. She had been the only Latina sitting judge on Long Island. She had been a lawyer and assistant provost at Hofstra University. Now, she had to give up all power and authority and surrender to God. She was an undergraduate student at John Jay. She married at 20, raised five children and began law school at 25. After graduation from NYTS, she was asked to stay as a professor and a job was created especially for her. For three years, she studied with a limited income while going through a tumultuous divorce, but God sustained her. She said that every ‘Progression in Session’ student has passion and drive. Everyone is already engaged in ministry even if it’s not acknowledged as such. Dr. Diaz then provided a brief overview of the Doctor of Ministry program – using my Demonstration Project as an example. She told the class that Rev. Angie’s thesis will be published and available to the public. After Dr. Diaz’s concluding remarks, the students completed the final in-class assignment/questionnaire and the last evaluation form.¹⁵⁴

The class also took group pictures of the experience. (See Appendix T, NYTS pictures from Dr. Diaz).

Bro. Smith was waiting for us where he dropped us off. We boarded the bus back to Mt. Vernon. The inspiration that was felt that evening continued on the ride home. The students all contributed monies toward an honorarium for Bro. Smith to show our appreciation. Overall, the college tour was more than what we expected and enlightened the class in every way.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Graduation Fellowship

On Saturday, July 14, 2012, the “Progression in Session” class met for its Graduation Fellowship. The event took place in the Fellowship Hall at Greater Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church. The students contributed to the fellowship by bringing a meal of their choice. Once again, planning was an essential aspect of this entire project. The Promo Team sent a sheet around to ask students what they would bring that afternoon. I’ve always expressed to the students that reciprocal communication is very important so that everyone is clear. As appropriate, the fellowship opened with the reading of Scripture and a word of prayer. In my opening remarks to the class I, “reiterated the importance of being planted at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church”¹⁵⁵ expressing that individuals need to allow their spiritual “roots to grow”¹⁵⁶ deep. I also told them that “God has a purpose for each person at the church...and that there is the opportunity to become active in a ministry.”¹⁵⁷

On this particular day, students read their essays or had the option to share what they learned from the entire “Progression in Session” experience. In order to acclimate students to public speaking, [and help them to grow in this area I asked everyone to speak... at a podium with a microphone.]

The following is a summary (from the students’ comments) taken by Joan Shedlovsky, Business Assistant, on the day of the graduation:

Throughout the course of the ‘Progression in Session’ class, students gained self-confidence, improving their reading skills (reading Scripture), vocabulary building (word of the day) and writing (take-home essay) while learning of God’s

¹⁵⁵ Joan Shedlovsky, Graduation Fellowship Synopsis, July 14, 2012.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

purpose for their lives...There was a greater understanding of God as well as self-understanding. Some students faced major struggles. However, it is never too late to pursue an education. Knowledge and wisdom are available to all. ‘Progression in Session’ filled a void that other recovery programs did not. Their intimacy with God has grown. ‘Progression in Session’ gave some students the incentive to persevere and go back to college one day.¹⁵⁸

Graduation Day for Students

The culmination of the “Progression in Session” course occurred on Sunday, July 15, 2012. For the students, it was long awaited (Graduation Sunday). They were especially excited that Pastor W. Darin Moore (now bishop) was going to recognize their accomplishments. It had been discussed throughout the course several times that our pastor, Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore, was in support of this innovative project and the outcome that the research would generate. To encourage the students to complete the class and graduate, I included on the syllabus the following incentive: “The class is being held for only 12 weeks. (Each session is 90 minutes). To familiarize participants with the classroom and grading structure of [academic] institutions, a Certificate of Completion will be awarded to those who attend all sessions. You can complete and graduate from this groundbreaking project!” Like Jesus, I extended grace to students, but insisted that they attend a specific number of classes to graduate. I did this as a way to be fair to all students. Being a hard worker myself, I understood the challenges of being a student. Therefore, I wanted to make a way for all of “Progression in Session” students to graduate, while challenging them to grow academically.

I must admit that all the students worked very hard, and were extremely committed in every way. July 13th 15th was a very busy weekend for the class (Friday, the college tour, Saturday, the Graduation Fellowship: and Sunday Graduation Day).

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

With exuberance and excitement after the fellowship on Saturday afternoon, the students went up to the sanctuary. They planned where they would sit for Sunday's service as they wanted to sit together. Pastor Moore had previously agreed to recognize the class at the 12:00 service. Viewing the enthusiasm of my students that day was very similar to witnessing an actual graduation from an academic institution. As their Instructor, I was very proud of the students' accomplishments.

The afternoon's occasion is summarized as follows by my business assistant:

On Sunday, July 15, at the 12 noon service, Pastor W. Darin Moore recognized the work of Rev. Angela Ryan in developing *Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session*. He spoke about Rev. Angie's tireless efforts to institute this innovative program and have it to succeed at Greater Centennial AME Zion Church. Pastor Moore acknowledged each graduate as he presented them with their Certificates of Completion. This favorable recognition of persons in recovery was paramount and supports Rev. Angie's Demonstration Project in every way. Greater Centennial AME Zion Church should be congratulated for embracing, empowering and encouraging those who society deems "the least of these." Rev. Angie will continue to encourage as many as she can to worship at this house.¹⁵⁹

To commemorate the day, many photographs were taken by Antoinette Anderson, Church Photographer. These photographs will serve as a lasting memory of this first-time, historic occasion. Many of these pictures will be used in the Transformational Video for the Demonstration Project. Sister Anderson also took several pictures of the "Progression in Session class" during the course.

I am grateful for the support given to our class by Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church members and staff. In particular, Facilities workers Lawrence Davis and Robert Woodson (who is affectionately known in the church as Uncle Bobby) always worked in a special way to assure that they created an atmosphere conducive to that of a

¹⁵⁹ Joan Shedlovsky, Graduation Day Synopsis, July 15, 2012.

spiritual and academic classroom structure. In actuality, I must extend my sincere gratitude to the entire Facilities Team for all of their assistance in accommodating our efforts and in seeing that “Progression in Session” was successful. Sister Joann Jones (Church Administrator) was very instrumental in ensuring that our team had room space for all our meetings. She also assisted in the copying of material that was used in the project.

Leaders Guidebook/Training Manual for Churches

As per Goal 4 Strategy 1 on my Demonstration Project Proposal, I was to “create an inspirational handbook, one that would serve as a model for training churches to work effectively with the recovery community.” Therefore, I created a Guidebook, a step- by-step instructional manual that other individuals could emulate and teach the “Progression in Session” course. (See Appendix U, Guidebook) Along with the Guidebook, will be a Creative Song and a Transformational Video, packaged and given specifically to the churches that participated in this project in case they want to implement the program.

Transformational Video

As part of this project, the proposed solution to my challenge statement was synthesized in a dynamic transformational video. (See Appendix V, Transformational Video) Once again, the skilled creative talent of videographer DK was essential in accomplishing this effort. We met several times to gather footage. Some of the students of “Progression in Session” class were videotaped as they expressed their experiences of being on the journey. We also captured various places in the community where God has allowed my ministry to impact others. The three academic institutions are included as well.

Creative Song

One of the gifted songstresses at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Nicole Phifer, allowed God to use her in the designing of a creative song for the project. I know God has jokes, because the day Nicole asked me to write some of the lyrics that I wanted included in the song, I became a songwriter as well as an author that day! The concept and words that I envisioned in the song, blended along with Nicole's ideas and talents. God gave me words that expressed what God wanted me to convey. (See Appendix W, Creative Song)

Observations of What I Learned

"Progression in Session" is needed in the church and in the community. The program was accepted by a majority, and misunderstood by a minority (which was to be expected). I opened the program up to professionals in the fields of addiction. Sadly, only a couple of persons took advantage and saw that spirituality and education work as a holistic means of treatment. What I learned by observation from students during break-out sessions was that they are very intelligent individuals who want to learn more.

CHAPTER 6

MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

“To what shall we liken the kingdom of God, Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown ...is smaller than all the seeds on the earth, but when it is sown, it grows up...” (Mark 4:30-31)

In the Demonstration Project Proposal stage of my project, each of my Site Team members devoted their time and resources to assess my ministerial competencies. The list of competencies I had to choose from, to progress in, included Preacher, Administrator, Worship Leader, Change Agent, Religious Educator, Ecumenist, Counselor, Pastor/Shepherd, Spiritual Leader or Professional Leader. In particular, I chose to develop competencies in the following two areas of ministry: Administration and Religious Educator. The following are the combined comments that my Site Team members made on my submitted Demonstration Project Proposal regarding their assessments of my skills in both areas before I began working on the project.

Frankly,

As Administrator –One part of Rev. Ryan’s ministry that she works diligently to improve is her administrative skills. She knows the task at hand, but struggles with organizing her thoughts so that they may work in her favor in order to achieve her goals. Rev. Ryan needs to continue to improve her administrative proficiency through honing her computer aptitude and organization skills. She experiences difficulty in articulating the algorithm necessary to work through multilayered programs and then allocating the resources required for completion. Rev. Ryan needs to establish goals and then pursue them. Candidate will work on developing administrative skills.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ Site Team Members’ Comments, Demonstration Project Proposal, “Ministerial Competencies,” July 2012, 42.

Informatively, the team also contributed the following combined comment regarding my competencies in the area of Religious Education.

As Religious Educator -Rev. Ryan has studied the Bible and other religious texts in church and in school. The main tenet of her Doctoral work is the synchronicity of education and spirituality and its power to transform lives. She has taught at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church on numerous occasions, including what may be her most favorite – G.L.A.D. [lessons in small group]. Her teaching style is practical and biblical – it's Jesus. She has also taught a class on Prayer that was well received. Her work in the Recovery Ministry was primarily that of a religious instructor. Rev. Ryan is most comfortable in the preacher /teacher-student setting. *Candidate wants to extend her knowledge of religion to assist others and wants to continue her own religious education*¹⁶¹

Strategies of Development

Regarding focused strategies, in order to strengthen my executive and leadership skills as an *Administrator*, I planned to strengthen these two skills in doing this my Demonstration Project. I decided in this way, so that I could become more organized in my work and more strategic in my thinking. My first goal was to audit a leadership/administration course with Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall (advisor). My second aim was to gain more knowledge and insight in administration by creating a ten-book bibliography (specific to administration). I planned to read as much of the material as possible. As a measure of evaluation I was to also attend 75% of [the] administration classes; attendance was to be verified by the professor. The ten-book bibliography was to be verified by the professor. The following list of books met this requirement: (See Appendix X, Administration Bibliography).

As a *Religious Educator*, in order for me to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of religious literature and teaching techniques (so that I could become a more effective instructor and assist others in their spiritual journey and development), I

¹⁶¹ Site Team Members' Comments, Demonstration Project Proposal, July 2012, 40.

also planned to achieve two specific strategies in my Demonstration Project. In completing the first, I was to audit a religious education course. I also planned to stay immersed in teaching the Biblical course G.L.A.D. at my church. In addition, I felt that it was of utmost importance that I continue to gain insight and illumination as I hone my spiritual gift of both preaching and teaching God's Word. Therefore, it was vitally necessary for me (as with Administration) to create a ten-book bibliography of religious education books. I planned to read as much of the material as possible. As a measure of evaluation, I was to "have 100% [of the bibliography] reviewed and verified by Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore." I sent the bibliography to Pastor Moore on October 4, 2012. The following is the list of books that are shaping my religious education skills: (See Appendix Y, Religious Educator Bibliography)

Leadership Institute

The actual development of my administration skills although planned one way was accomplished in another manner. This happened according to God's plans. As a way of developing the two above-mentioned competencies, I attended a Leadership Retreat held by The North Eastern Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. (See Appendix Z, NED Leadership Training Institute) It was held at the Hyatt Regency in Greenwich, Connecticut, September 26-28, 2012. While there, I audited an Administration class to help increase my skills. I also audited a Leadership class to give me better insight as a Religious Educator.

The Administration Class

In specific, the Administration class was taught by The Rev. Kenneth I. Lewis. He used a lecturing style of teaching. Being an academician and having learned from this

style of teaching, I was able to appreciate and glean understanding from his presentation.

The contents of course material included the following module vision statement:

“Administration starts with a thorough understanding of Christ’s mission for His church locally and globally. Such an understanding is needed to shape and motivate the accomplishment of interrelated ministries and tasks in a particular congregation.

Administration could be defined as implementing and managing the mission of Christ in His Church.”¹⁶² In an interesting way, the “workshop dealt with...the development of the administrator...the student, the minister, or perspective pastor. As the basic foundation for such development the workshop [taught] that all church leaders work from three ever-present realities: 1) what you are, 2) what you know, and 3) what you do.”¹⁶³ In addition, it was taught in the class that, “Administration is a continual and intentional process that connects and uses gifts of individual believers, to enable a particular congregation to win people to Christ and to build a spiritually healthy church.”¹⁶⁴ In essence, “the end of the administrative process is to win souls.”¹⁶⁵ Before taking this class, I felt that I did not have administration skills believing that a great knowledge of budgeting, and organization was the sole requirement.

From taking this class I learned that, “Unlike the way secular business operate, the church does its work through relationships, voluntary relationships built on a common faith. While the chief executive officer (CEO) of a business hires and fires and has

¹⁶² Rev. Keith I. Lewis, Administration Class Handout Sheet, September 26-28, 2012.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Rev. Keith I. Lewis, “Administration Class” (notes taken in Administration Class, September 26, 2012).

authority to use personnel as a business commodity, the pastor leads by inspiration, instruction, information, and influence.”¹⁶⁶ Taking this class cleared up my understanding, and solidified my comprehension, that I do have several significant administration skills. I provide for many of the church’s member’s at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church what Northouse describes as strong leadership factors, which include “inspirational motivation,”¹⁶⁷ “intellectual stimulation”¹⁶⁸, and “idealized consideration.”¹⁶⁹ God also uses my “idealized influence”¹⁷⁰ (that God, Godself has given to me) allowing me to “act as a strong role model.”¹⁷¹ My style of administrative leadership is synchronized with Reverend Lewis’ suggestion, which states, “you can’t beat people up”¹⁷², or “throw people away,”¹⁷³ but we must “develop [God’s people]”¹⁷⁴. I am also in consensus with Reverend Lewis regarding the way in which an administrative leader should spend time in conversation with those he or she is leading.¹⁷⁵ He stated in the class that it makes a big difference in morale when an administrative

¹⁶⁶ Rev. Keith I. Lewis, Administration Class Handout Sheet, September 26-28, 2012.

¹⁶⁷ Peter Northouse, 177.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Rev. Keith I Lewis, Administration Class Handout Sheet, September 26, 2012.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Rev. Keith I. Lewis, “Administration Class” (notes taken in Administration Class, September 26, 2012).

leader shares with his or her team members, “I can’t wait to see the outcome,”¹⁷⁶ “no decision you make will sink the ship,”¹⁷⁷ I trust you,”¹⁷⁸ or “you’re competent”¹⁷⁹ Words such as these, strengthen an individual, encouraging positive outcomes toward the collective goals of the church. Most importantly, I am confident that I have administration skills since, “administration is the way the Gospel moves from concept to reality, in a congregation and through that congregation to its community.”¹⁸⁰ I firmly believe that learning is a process. Therefore, all that was needed to be understood about administration could not be grasped in one course. However, I found this class to be very helpful.

The Leadership Class

The Leadership class was taught by The Reverend Gina Casey. As an instructor, she taught the class about the interruptions that occur in life. Various “interruptions happen to religious leaders and to the people they lead.”¹⁸¹ Rev. Casey’s methodology of teaching was very similar to the way I teach. She taught the group in a participatory fashion, wrote on a dry erase board, allowed the class to break up into small groups and spiritually problem solve.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Rev. Gina Casey, “Leadership Class” (notes taken in Leadership Class, September 26, 2012).

Informatively, an interruption, defined as “a break or discontinuance”¹⁸² is “often negative, but can be positive.”¹⁸³ The types of interruptions that the class members listed (at Rev. Gina’s request) were: an illness, unemployment, death, addiction, divorce, weather, bills, an accident, foreclosure, relocation, and an unexpected pregnancy.¹⁸⁴ It was then asked of the class to describe how interruptions are best handled. The students answers included the following: read Scripture, pray, listen for and to God (for understanding), network, use resources, have an open mind, question God, talk about it with God, take a long drive, allow an emotional release-cry, reorganize, re-prioritize, internalize what the interruption is doing to you, beware of depression, keep it real- be honest with yourself, that you have been interrupted, and recognize support systems.¹⁸⁵ Rev. Casey shared with the class that, “When individuals are handled life’s interruptions we don’t always respond appropriately.”¹⁸⁶ Jesus was recommended as the primary example the students were to model, in handling interruptions.

At a certain point in the session, when the class broke up into small groups, we looked at several biblical texts where Jesus was interrupted. The students discussed among the group how, in fact, Jesus handled those interruptions. The biblical texts included Mark 5:21-43, Luke 5: 17-26, and Luke 24:13-22. An interesting (and balanced) learning approach that Rev. Casey used was that she asked that some of the students assess how Jesus handled interruptions, and others to gage how His disciples

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

handled interruptions. Through our engagement of the above texts, the class made the following contributions regarding the way Jesus handled interruptions. The following comments were made, “Leaders have to have compassion,”¹⁸⁷ “Some interruptions are subtle,”¹⁸⁸ “Sometimes one needs not to hold to the letter of the law,”¹⁸⁹ “You don’t always have to destroy a person,”¹⁹⁰ and “Meekness is power under control.”¹⁹¹

Additional contents of Rev. Casey’s course material included her giving the class several exercises to conceptualize that “change is difficult.” First, she asked the class to fold our elbows. Then she had us to fold them the other way. Secondly, the class paired off in two’s, one person turned his/her back, while the other person made five alterations to his/her outer appearance (clothing). When the other person turned around, he or she was to guess what was different about the other person’s dress. The class found these two above exercises to be quite unique.

In a transparent way, Rev. Casey also taught the class from an experiential way. She brought a personal story to the class about one of her experiences that involved an interruption. She clothed the personal story in a case study for the class to determine how the person should have handled the interruption. Rev. Casey didn’t tell the class until the end that the interruption had happened to her. Her story can be read in *Sage Sisters: Essential Lessons for African American Women in Ministry*. According to Northouse, an authentic leader is “one who will open themselves up and establish a connection with

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

others... willing to share their own story with others and listen to others stories. Through mutual disclosure, leaders and subordinates develop a sense of trust and closeness.”¹⁹²

I leave you, the reader, with the following quotes from Rev. Casey’s class: “one [should] always determine whether an interruption is major or minor¹⁹³[in life], “interruptions are not the end of the world,”¹⁹⁴ “Once we give our lives to Christ, God has the right to interrupt our life,”¹⁹⁵ “God uses interruptions to bless us,” and “The Hand of God is in charge of interruptions.” This minister and religious educator’s class was very informative, insightful, and inspirational. Her energy level kept me enthused throughout the sessions. From taking this class, I was able to gain a new appreciation for the many interruptions that have occurred in my life. The class provided me with new material to help me “go with the flow”¹⁹⁶ in handling future interruptions.

Throughout Rev. Casey’s class, the subject of addiction/recovery came up by the participants. Many, who were clergy, did not know how to deal with this subject. Therefore, it was suggested by the participants that during the next Leadership Retreat that a workshop be offered to help churches understand addiction issues. I wrote on the evaluation form that I would be willing to share my knowledge and experience if asked.

¹⁹² Peter Northouse, 213.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Rev. Gina Casey, “Leadership Class” (notes taken in Leadership Class, September 26, 2012).

Personal Growth Gained From Competencies/Project

Regarding personal growth in the areas of administration, teacher, and religious educator, I must state that each area has increased in a significant way as a result of my implementing the Demonstration Project, working on the competency development and from instituting the actual “Progression in Session” project, and Thesis writing. Informatively, although there was a “team concept” that was designed to assist Doctoral students, it was clearly communicated by Dr. Keith Russell that, at the end of the project, students had the ultimate responsibility for the outcome of the Demonstration Project. Therefore, it was important for me to assume administrative leadership in overseeing the project. The structural design (or team configuration) that worked best for the Site Team (that God sent me to help me fulfill His purpose) is appropriately called a “Circle Network.”¹⁹⁷

This design is a type of network,

Where information and decisions flow sequentially from one group member to another. Each can add to or modify whatever comes around. This design relies solely on lateral coordination and simplifies communication. Each person has to deal directly with only two others; transactions are therefore easier to manage. But one weak link in the chain can undermine the entire enterprise [or group effort and outcome]. The circle can bog down with complex tasks that require more reciprocity.¹⁹⁸

Addressing this more specifically, the “circle network” works best with five-person groups¹⁹⁹, which was primarily the makeup of my Site Team. Elaborating on my administrative skills within this capacity, I provided the Site Team with administrative

¹⁹⁷ Lee G. Boleman & Terrance E. Deal, *Reframing Organizations* (San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass), 105.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

leadership by offering spiritual guidance in formulating the structure of the type of meetings that were held, and by being in attendance at every meeting. I also coordinated and communicated with Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church regarding all events (times, dates etc.) using required forms. Moreover, I assured that the project/team kept within the protocol and parameters that were stipulated by the church. I organized in-depth classes every Friday. I also coordinated an educational symposium, arranging for speakers to come to Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church to present to the “Progression in Session” class. This effort required me to think and plan several weeks in advance. I communicated many times with Dr. Bront from the College of New Rochelle regarding the details of the educational symposium. This included obtaining biographies of the speakers. In addition, I worked in a systematic way with NYTS (Dr. Cynthia Diaz) to have a college tour for the students.

In specific, as an administrator, these skills taught me to organize, strategize, meet deadlines, and take and review detailed notes. Furthermore, I was able to complete all lesson plans on time, provided a list of students names to NYTS for purposes of identification, worked with the church’s Facilities department in setting up the classroom. In addition, I implemented supervision and oversight to both the Site and Promo Teams. Overall, as a leader, I am a very “passionate individual...have a deep-seated interest in what I am doing, and truly care about my work.”²⁰⁰

²⁰⁰ Peter Northouse, 213.

Evaluation and Success of Project

As a Religious Educator, I instructed, encouraged, nurtured, counseled, mentored, and provided discipleship to students, which has resulted in the transformative growth of the “Progression in Session” students. Regarding educational pursuits, Robin Tomlin was accepted to the College of New Rochelle and is now working on her Bachelor’s degree. Stephen Kendell will be going to DeVry Institute to work on his degree in forensic science. Sharon Middleton is working on getting her GED. Kim Johnson will be returning to school in January. Simone Marshall plans to attend La Guardia College in January, and will be taking the next Timothy class to enter ministry. Danny Williams will be pursuing his GED in January. As stated throughout this document, there was substantial growth in the students as a result of “Progression in Session” that could be seen academically as well as spiritually. Moreover, two of the Promo Team members, Wendy Bratcher and Sutana Goldson, are seriously considering returning to college.

Qualitative Research: Competency Development Religious Educator Students Papers “Progression in Session” and Archway Clinic

I gave these resuscitated scholars take-home essays. They had two weeks to complete their assignment. The essay was twofold in nature. Students were to first give their suggestions for how the Church can better understand people in the Recovery process. Secondly, they were to include how the “Progression in Session” class helped them to grow both spiritually and academically. Students were to be specific about what they learned. The first thread of comments you will read will address recommendations to the Church. These moving replies were submitted from the students who came along on the “Progression in Session” journey. Note, these candid responses and reports (which equate to an abundance of rigorous research data) will generate interest for

pastors, and clergy who struggle with the inclusivity of persons with addictions issues in their congregations. Hopefully, it will also encourage them to consider building a recovery program of a similar type. I present to you, the reader, the graduating students' suggestions for the Church on how to better understand and offer help to persons in the recovery process:

The first student states,

Recovery is a spiritual journey which will result in spiritual changes as well as emotional and physical ones. This is one reason, among many, why having a supportive faith community during recovery can be extremely important. Although a small percentage of people are able to recover from addiction, the majority of individuals need love and support from church members. Having a safe community of people with whom to worship and learn can be a big help. Finding such a community may not, unfortunately, be easy. In the recovery process, individuals are fragile, have issues with trust and socialization. Most times, they find church members as a potential threat and the individual in recovery often finds it difficult to understand God. Many individuals grow up in dysfunctional families in which one or both parents are abusive, neglectful or are themselves substance abusers. As a result, substance abusers have a hard time relating to God as a loving parent. I believe churches must educate the leadership which will breed more acceptances of people and their problems. Pastors and elders especially need to be aware of the facts of addiction and recovery and it should be made mandatory. In doing so, they will be encouraged to work on their own recovery as well. We all suffer from some form of addiction. What happens when an individual seeks help from a member of the congregation and they have no idea what to do? I'm glad you asked. The individual may return back to the familiar and there is a strong possibility they may relapse. I suggest churches create a safe place where individuals can nurture their spirits which will nurture them holistically. The reward is, watching the stages and phases of transformation taking place in the individual whom you helped. [Also] help other individuals by starting programs in and out of their local churches. If leadership is able to witness the recovery process, it will help members to be more sympathetic toward the majority of individuals who are seeking God, treatment and support. It is important to have a place where you can experience grace-based worship in a loving and caring environment. 2 Corinthians 5:17 [states], 'If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.' I can proudly say, I am a new creature in Christ.²⁰¹

Another student writes,

²⁰¹ Kim Johnson, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

If my voice could be heard and I could share my thoughts with the church I would tell them basically people use substances such as alcohol and drugs because they like the way these substances make them feel. Pleasure is a powerful force. Your brain is wired in such a way that if you do something that gives you pleasure you will probably want to do it again. I want the church to know that people in recovery should not be looked down on, but to be lifted up with compassion, love, understanding, and with much prayer. Addiction is a chronic relapse disease. It may take a number of attempts before a person can remain free. Meanwhile, they need a place to come with believers and begin to understand why they do drugs and [W]ho can deliver them from it.²⁰²

Another student shares,

If my Voice could be heard and I could share some of my thoughts with the Church about how they could understand and treat people in recovery, I would tell them that a primary foundation and strength of Christianity is forgiveness. In Matthew 6:14, Jesus says: ‘For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.’ People in recovery have taken the most important step – they have stopped using drugs and alcohol and now are in the processing of rebuilding their lives. They are coming out of the wilderness, heading for the Promised Land. Now, they need the support and understanding of the Church. It is important to remember that ‘Church’ not only refers to a building, but to fellowship of Christians. Therefore, the Church’s role is to welcome all. The more members who are seen as an integral part of the Church, the stronger the institution becomes. Charity is one of the greatest virtues of Christianity. In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul said: ‘And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.’ Therefore, the Church is called upon to care for ‘the least of these’ – the most vulnerable members of society and that includes those who have been addicted to drugs and alcohol. In order to be true to the original tenets of Christianity, it is important to remind church members of the imperative of respecting and helping every member of society and to assist those who have made the decision (those in recovery) to turn their lives around. It is worth remembering that ““whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved an entire world.” (Talmud quote) Salvation is at the core of the Church.²⁰³

Another student commented,

When my voice will be heard by my fellow servants, I will tell them all, outside and inside [and] the church would hear how much I love Jesus. Through my

²⁰² Sharon Middleton, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

²⁰³ Joan Shedlovsky, Take-Home Essay, August 9, 2012.

suffering and struggle only my God got me through the pain I put on myself by using drugs that took me many places. Now that I belong to an awesome church, and Godly pastor I would like the people to help me become a more Godly man (that means the men in the church). God has changed me. ‘And we know that all things work for the good of those called according to God’s purpose.’ (Rom. 8:28). When my voice will be heard, I will pray to God that this church will keep helping people that come into the church suffering and struggling (just be more understanding about the disease, and learn about ‘Progression in Session,’ Rev. Angela Ryan, Church, N.A., A.A, or any other program...let someone help you. God Almighty created each and every one of us for a purpose and a place in the world, and for the least of us to think that we’re created to be what we are and not what we can make ourselves is to impute an improper motive to the creator for creating us.²⁰⁴ Using my voice will give...light in one’s heart to let him or her know that whatever the problem is, just pray and give it to God. God loves you...When my voice is heard.²⁰⁵

Another student shared the following series of words,

If my voice could be heard and I could share some of my thoughts with the church about how they could better understand or treat people in recovery I would tell them that people in the recovery process would like the church to be there for them, to be a friend and to love them. The reason I feel this way is because people come to the church and don’t feel like they have a friend in the church or don’t feel love by the church, because they don’t show that it cares about recovery people. It makes them feel like an outcast, like recovery people are not like regular people too. Just because they are people under construction doesn’t mean they are to be ignored. Jesus came to save sinners. People in recovery have a ‘plethora’ of emotional issues such as trauma, abuse, anxiety, depression, and fear. Unless the church sees that, and do something, the church will not be able to grow the way the Lord wants us to grow, and souls will be leaving the church; the church will become stagnant. *Addictive Thinking and Addictive Personality* by Craig Nakken and Abraham Twerski leads us to problems in the mind. This occurs from the problems we face in our lives and the way in which we deal with these challenges.²⁰⁶

Another student wrote,

I have often seen and overheard conversations in church when people with an obvious addiction, enters into the house of the Lord. The facial expressions and body language was so disturbing it made me afraid to say to the person next to me

²⁰⁴ African American Quotes, Marcus Garvey, <http://africanamericanquotes.org/marcus-garvey.html> (Accessed February 26, 2012).

²⁰⁵ Danny Williams, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

²⁰⁶ Simone Marshall, Take-Essay, June 22, 2012.

'I can relate to his struggle, because God has delivered me.' If my voice can be heard We are all children of God. I am a testimony of God's grace and His mercy. I would want them to understand that people with addictions are not bad people. We just made a bad choice. Addictions tear you down, mentally, physically, and spiritually. It makes you feel lost, alone, and unworthy of life. Every step that you take feels like a thousand pound weight is holding you back. So, when God blesses us with the courage to press our way into His house, His people need not be afraid of us. [On the other hand they should] welcome us with open arms and un-judging hearts. For those of us who God has delivered it is our job to collectively make the Church aware of those still sick and suffering. I believe the first step to better understanding people in recovery is Rev. Angela's program, 'Progression in Session.'²⁰⁷

Another student made the following contributions,

After a life of continuing despair, with no immediate end in sight, I finally entered a...program with spiritual principals. 'Order thy steps in thy word' (Psalm 119:133 NKJV) means to me God is in everything I do, and how I function. [If my voice could be heard] I would want the church to consider that the person sitting next to you could be an addict in recovery. I would want the church members to know that people in recovery need spiritual...structure, and people who have courage to reach out and help us, uplift us, through the power of the spoken [preached] word. I am drawn to be in spiritual places. The church is an important part of my renewal. It is a place that I must be, for I feel that God requires it of me.²⁰⁸

Another student wrote,

If my voice would be heard in church to express my thoughts, [so] that they could understand people in recovery [the] first thing I would say is [to]forgive them as God forgive us because addiction has us as individuals to become bankrupt spiritually and dwell in the wilderness. As God used Moses to deliver Egypt out of bondage, as an addict God also would...free me from bondage. While... in recovery it will be uncomfortable (there is fear), feeling different, makes change hard. But through God...my life will be better through worship and salvation, being consistent going to church not being afraid of who (or anyone) talking about me...²⁰⁹

This student stated,

²⁰⁷ Edward Gray, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

²⁰⁸ Victoria Geter, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

²⁰⁹ Sharon Bradwell, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

If my voice could be heard and I could share some of my thoughts with the Church on how they could understand and treat individuals in recovery, I would tell them the following. The church member should show empathy to those in recovery, because if it had not been for God's Grace and Mercy, they too could have been in this predicament. Church members should be able to recognize their own bias and baggage when greeting individuals and being in the presence of someone who has been injured, damaged, or traumatized, and not add more insult to injury. Church members should understand should understand that not everyone is blessed with the same opportunities, and that you do not have to condone what someone is doing or have done in the past, but you can offer understanding even if you are not in agreement. It is important to be willing to listen without judgment and bias. Whenever, ever possible, the church could offer assistance, because often times, individuals in recovery lack resources because they have may have "burned bridges" due to their addictive behaviors. In other words, be willing to share your time and resources, and maybe even your family because many individuals in recovery, their families may not want anything to do with them, making them isolated and more vulnerable and likely to become more depressed and another reason to just give up and relapse again. The church members should utilize the fruit of the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22-23) Church people should treat people the same, in terms of being kind and doing good to all members regardless of their background. However, those in recovery may require more of their time than others, because they are more fragile and may be quick to give up if they feel that no one cares. Church members should be aware that those in recovery may have an issue with trust and it's not about you and to not be insulted if your offering is not always received, but keep trying to plant the seed and eventually the soil will loosen.²¹⁰

Another individual wrote candidly,

The church should treat people in recovery with understanding, respect, and kindness. People in recovery are learning new ways to respond to stressful situations in their lives. The process of recovery can be a very challenging and difficult task. Family and friends of those in recovery are impacted by their illicit substance use as well. I have found that it is most necessary to respect each individual in their individual paths. Kindness is also most necessary in accepting those in recovery into the fold. [For it is written], 'I will seek the lost, and bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, I will strengthen the weak.'²¹¹ (Ezekiel 34:16NKJV)

²¹⁰ Sharon Bradwell, 6/22/12.

²¹¹ Pam Wainaina, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

Still, another student writes her contribution,

A few suggestions on how the church can better understand people in the recovery process [are] maybe the pastor of the church can speak on some of the ways and behaviors of people in a recovery in a sermon from time to time. [In addition] teach the people that addiction is an illness, [and] have more classes similar to ['Progression in Session']. Maybe have sessions where people can give their testimonies. Allow people to speak freely to the point where they don't have to be in fear of being judged. (a common thread) I am glad I was able to stick and stay. Rev. Ryan is one of the reasons why I am here today in this process, because I am saved spiritually, and academically I am able to go through this process without being in fear. Today I know that people go through things for a reason. Sometimes things happen for a reason. The reason could be to make us all better people.²¹²

Another student writes the following as a way to give suggestion to the church,

If my voice could be heard and I could share some of my thoughts with the church about how they could understand people in recovery I would tell them [the following]. We are not ignorant or stupid. Many men and women in recovery are doctors, lawyers, judges, police officers, case workers, and ministers. They hold Associates, Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate degrees. They...love God. I would tell them, we come in all colors and shapes and sizes as well as different backgrounds. We cry the same as [those in the church] we hurt like you hurt. The only difference is that we are the chosen few who became addicted. We all lived a life of pain and pleasure just like you. If my voice could be heard, I would tell the church, we made choices, and wrong turns, [and] had our back against the wall just like you. When [we] walked those streets, alone, crying out in pain, we did not know God had us. When we were in the wrong place dodging bullets God shielded us. When ...getting into strangers cars God protected me. When I found myself in dangerous places God redirected me. Many days I cried out to the Lord and thought I was not being heard. God heard me. When all my money was spent and my belly was empty God fed me. When I thought all hope was gone, God came and got me. I give all praises to him. If my voice could be heard, I would tell the people [in the church], I am free, I am Free, thank you God for freeing me. We are the world. We are all His children, and it's no stopping us now.²¹³

Another student made the following contribution,

²¹² Seena Epps, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

²¹³ Veneese Tucker, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

I feel how the church can better understand people in the recovery process is when....[they] say they know my plight...Also, as far as church people go, when it comes to them better treating the topic of drug addiction, I think if they have a class for adults...and teach them about addiction[it would be helpful]. In the Scriptures, Apostle Paul is my favorite, because of all the trials and tribulations he went through when he was going from city to city. For example, when he was shipwrecked, flogged, jailed and was set to be crucified, but no matter what, he never stopped preaching and teaching the Word of God. It reminds me of what I went through being very sick. [I was] in I.C.U., M.I C. U., in jail, in T.C.'s, in nursing homes, and [I had to deal with] the death of my dad—and no matter what I went through, the Lord seen me through all of it. [Therefore] I know in my heart... the Lord whom I give all the glory has a purpose for m. Also, I know today I no longer have to use drugs and abuse my body because I am a blessed child of the Most High God.²¹⁴

The last student commented,

If my voice could be heard in the church; I would tell the church that People with addictions are just that, PEOPLE. We all are products from different walks of Life, some came up poor, others middle class, etc. No one is perfect, but addiction does not show prejudice, and it doesn't matter how it's discovered, but just know that it is a learned behavior and cannot be controlled on just saying stop. It has to come from within. No matter on what type of addiction it is. There is help out there for those who seek it. The churches place should be a place of understanding, [a] non- judgmental, place of solitude, a safe atmosphere to speak out loud, cry, laugh, [and] to get that help you need One Day at a time (For Breakthrough and Healing Asking God for His help in your search for recovery).²¹⁵

In conclusion, from the above research that I have gathered, there is a strong consensus and overarching theme from the students that the Church should do all it could to provide greater understanding, not be judgmental, practice acceptance, and extend unconditional forgiveness as Christ does. Individuals also desire support from the Church via programs, sermons and forums. Most importantly, students wanted the Church to know that, although, they have made poor choices and have had bad

²¹⁴ Robin Tomlin, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

²¹⁵ Sutana Goldson, Take-Home Essay, November 10, 2012.

experiences, the Church is a place where they feel they should be able to come, be loved and transformed.

Comments from Students about “Progression in Session”

By teaching “Progression in Session,” my competency as a Religious Educator developed and my proficiency in this area improved. This can be seen in the students’ evaluations of me as an instructor and by the students’ comments below. In every class, the students were taught Scripture. They were strongly encouraged to bring their Bibles to each class. I also provided suggested readings of books that were spiritual in nature to enhance their spiritual growth. In addition, prayer was held at the beginning and end of every session. As a result, the students grew spiritually. The following are the student’s observations regarding “Progression in Session.”

The first comments are as follows, [Regarding ‘Progression in Session’] Our presenter, Rev. Angela Ryan has almost completed a rigorous course that includes learning to implement responsive classroom principles and practices. ‘Stages and Phases of Transformation’ [‘Progression in Session’ class] has helped me to acquire biblical knowledge along with effective note taking and group participation. All of the lessons were insightful and educational. Rev. Angie was prepared and did all things with excellence. Some of our classroom discussions are of the following: A Journey with Purpose. [Session two] ‘For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’ (Jer. 29:11 NKJV) Rev. Angie posed a reflective question. What is your Purpose and what has God created you to do? Spread the word, street evangelism, prison ministry, educate the youth, teach and counsel. Progression is necessary to getting to your purpose. Most of all, your purpose is not about you! Well, enough said. When you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, clearly, your life is no longer your own. Your Steps have Been Ordered. [Session 3] ‘The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.’ (Psalms 37:23 NKJV) We discussed how God does not just create us with purpose. His plan is to continue taking us to our destiny (Location) God crafts stages and phases for our growth development. God’s [time] Kairos, not [human thought of sequential time] Chronos, is critical in the process to help us reach our purpose. Most importantly, we have to hear His voice. We also discussed Scripture, slavery, oppression, idol worship, co-dependency, cheating, adultery, arrogance, ‘Church hurt,’ Baptism, perseverance and consistency. Let’s not forget about ‘The Progression In Session’ Facebook page! We were able to

discuss each lesson weekly along with posting pics. Not only that, we were able to have phone conversations with Rev. Angie who has always made herself available. Although this is a start to a new beginning, I am confident God is going anoint the women of God whom he has chosen to fulfill his purpose. The class is AWESOME!!!²¹⁶

Another student wrote,

I did not know what to expect when I signed up for Stages and Phases of Transformation ['Progression in Session Class'], but since attending the classes, my writing skills and listening abilities have increased. I understand now that spirituality and education go together in one's life. I am motivated by Rev. Angela's teaching and [have] planned my next course of action. I enjoyed the classroom experience, and breaking up in the small groups. It has given me the opportunity to express myself and to listen to different views. Reading the scriptures and going over them has given me the understanding I needed. For example, Proverbs 12:26 [states] 'The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray.' [Deuteronomy 30:18 states] I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses therefore Choose life that both you and your descendants may live. In closing, I have been set free while attending the recovery [program] with Rev. Angela. Now, through these classes I will be able to help others and continue to further my education.²¹⁷

Another individual wrote,

I did not know what to expect when I signed up for this course [second portion]. While I was not a student, I provided assistance to Rev. Angie and attended many classes. The structure of 'Progression in Session' was extremely important – it was an organized classroom environment. Classes started on time, students took notes and participated in class discussions, there were recommended readings and students were given writing assignments. This setting encouraged responsibility, showed the importance of respecting others and pointed out that punctuality is expected in social settings. It also showed that learning can be fun and exciting. Most know the importance of education in becoming a productive member of society, but many don't realize that it is enjoyable and provides positive pleasure (as opposed to the negative pleasure of drugs and alcohol). Rev. Angie truly enjoys learning as well as teaching others. That passion came through and inspired students. The students were extremely involved in classroom discussions, especially when they were divided into groups and conferred with each other on the lesson of the day. Students looked forward to the 'word of the day' and incorporated these words into their vocabulary. It was easy to discern the growth in self-confidence and self-esteem among the students, culminating in

²¹⁶ Kim Johnson, 6/22/12.

²¹⁷ Sharon Middleton, 6/22/12.

the awarding of Certificates of Completion by Pastor Moore. I was impressed with the students' perseverance and that many are pursuing academic opportunities as a result of taking 'Progression in Session.' The course provided the needed tools for a successful transformation: a more intimate relationship with God and furthering of education goals.²¹⁸

Another student wrote,

Wow! I did not know what to expect when I signed up for ['Progression in Session'] course." Going back to school, I said to myself, it's been a long time. But God, knows... what I need. God placed the right one for me, Rev. Angela Ryan to talk about spirituality and academics. Our first session was [called] "Pathway to Progress" from Matthew 7:14 'Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are *many* who go in by it.' I've been there, and having a teacher like God giving me the Word lets me know many are those who are entering through [the wide gate]. The gate, however, is narrow contracted by pressure and the way is straight and compressed that leads way to life (progress), and few are those who find it. So from day one, I said to God let your will be done. It's been a lot of teaching, learning, and caring for each other. I have begun to grow and have confidence in myself. I work on my spelling and writing skills, listening abilities, small group [participation] and session book. I am planning on going back to school to get my GED and further my education. In Session Two 'A journey with Purpose'...I learned that my purpose was for me to get closer to the Son, Jesus Christ, so that I can become a better father to my three sons and grandchildren. This session let me know when it's not alright, it will be alright. [Our class] fellowshiped and has [much] love for each other. When someone [was] missing we [were] concerned. A few quotes I learned were, 'Let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 2:5) Be renewed in the Spirit of your mind Ephesians 4:23) and from Oprah Winfrey, 'What God intended for you goes far beyond anything you imagined.'²¹⁹

This student stated,

I did not know what to expect when I signed up for this course, but since taking it my writing skills and listening abilities have increased. Since I started the Progression in Session class it has helped me grow both spiritually and academically. Academically I have grown because I know how to write an essay and a very good essay at that, by learning how to pull from sources such as Craig Nakken and Abraham Twerski and to back that source up with examples. [For example] I am adopted and I must speak with my biological parent. They never wanted me. Spiritually, I have grown because of what I have learned about God's

²¹⁸ Joan Shedlovsky, 8/9/12.

²¹⁹ Danny Williams, 6/22/12.

people, who are people in recovery. ...Being a recovery person I can say that... the class was wonderful. When we would give answers to the facilitator to write on the board, that setting was successful, but the group session where we talked over our ideas and conversed with each other (having a dialogue) was most successful. [It was this way] because we were socializing to come up with the answers...and we were able to do this more efficiently. Most recovery people are single. We need to socialize more with friends, acquaintance, and members of the church then with the television or computer. Also, the class helped me to know that I have to stand on God's word by quoting His word back to Him to build a strong foundation. 1 John4:4 [says] 'Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.²²⁰

This student shared,

I must admit that I did not know what to expect when I walked into her class. As God would have it 9 weeks later, I have not missed a class. I look forward to Friday evenings to witness the next [way] God is using Rev. Angie to help her students find their way. How has the program helped me? It has given me accountability, a better understanding of scripture, helped me understand that the battle cannot be won on the street corner. We need to educate ourselves. This program has given me the opportunity to take a moral inventory of my life. One of our topics was knowledge: Information acquired over time, giving us wisdom and understanding of life on life's terms. In my own words, God places people in our lives for a reason. Now that I have acknowledged my choices in the past, I can now hear what God's plan is for my life.²²¹

This student commented,

[‘Progression in Session’] class has taught me that I have to make new decisions, take responsibilities, and not blame. [Also] that education and spirituality is a treatment, and that ‘progress’ requires sacrifices, struggle, and tireless exertions.”²²² I came to Rev. Angie’s workshop because I wanted to be around healthy people with new ideas similar to mine, and to use education as a tool for change. I am in a place that allows me to focus on self-betterment. Rev. Angie’s class reaches out to people in recovery, and she offers insights about inner transformation, from the very first class she has said that we transform by the ‘renewing of our minds.’ [‘Progression in Session’ class] focuses on individual wholeness, not the illness (disease of addiction)...Since I’ve taken this course, I have opened my ears to hear the Word, because of Rev. Angie’s spiritual passion when she ministers to us. Since I’ve been in the class, I’ve given thought to doing

²²⁰ Simone Marshall, 6/22/12.

²²¹ Edward Gray, 6/22/12.

²²² African American Quotes, Dr. Martin Luther King, <http://africanamericanquotes.org/education.htm> (Accessed February 26, 2012).

a Master's degree. Obstacles have come my way, making me doubtful sometimes. [However,] I know I have a choice. I know how to choose, and I need support and fellowship of this group that I am a part of.²²³

This student made the following statements,

When coming to attend ['Progression in Session'] class I had no idea what to expect, but through our spiritual teacher Rev. Angie she showed me the difference of being a drug addict in recovery and letting God become my life recovery, by having an education and letting God's purpose in my life take charge. I can become anything in my profession. I need college and use my listening to God to become a forensic employee in science, to receive a Bachelors and Master's degree. Rev. Angie showed me through God's will I can have it all...The Rev. Angie also directed us into the scriptures where salvation and changes can be made. This class is wonderful and need to be placed in churches around and in our community. Education is key to our success, and God don't want us to fail. God wants the best for us. [A quote] I read is 'Baby steps count as long as you are going forward.'²²⁴ [Also] 'Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase.'²²⁵ It's in the scriptures, Phil. 2:5 'Let this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus.' [Rev. Angela] is wonderful and this class I recommend to all to take, it opened my eyes to God's will and what His purpose in life for me is²²⁶

This student shared these thoughts about the class,

I did not know what to expect when I signed up for [the 'Progression in Session'] course, I thought that I would participate in the course to help out and maybe be helpful to those with issues of addiction, but little did I know that I would discover that I had an addiction. I am addicted to 'Love.' I am often pre-occupied with trying to pursue a relationship, so I can be in Love. Going down this road time and time again has been very painful and I know that I am still in the process of fighting with this addiction called Love. I love myself and I love God, but still I desire to have someone tangible to share my time and space with. I was married for 15 years and now divorced. I really liked being married and am still saddened that it did not work out. I continue to chase Love, so I can be married again. I probably spend a lot of time preparing for dates and think about dating (like someone would with a drug addiction). I often hook up with the wrong person and it's like getting a bad drug or something that has been mixed

²²³ Victoria Geter, 6/22/12.

²²⁴ African American Quotes, Eulon Musk, <http://africanamericanquotes.org/education.htm> (Accessed February 26, 2012).

²²⁵ Dr. Martin Luther King, 2/26/12.

²²⁶ Steven Kendell, Take-Home Essay, June 22, 2012.

with some unknown substance. It usually takes you on a trip that you don't want to experience again, and this is how some of my dates have been. There was one class when a few students spoke about their relationships. I was all ears, trying to learn what I could do better or not do. I do hear God's voice, 'seek ye first the kingdom of God....and all these things will be added unto you.'²²⁷ (Matthew 6:33) Similarly, to a person with a drug addiction, I do not always listen to God's voice. I want the instant gratification. And yes I discovered that I discovered that I have an addiction that can affect my present and future. I am addicted to Love, and I am often in relapse mode. What inspired me about the course is when the clad participants were very candid when answering the questions and giving their testimonies about their own situations. It really felt like a safe place. The instructor, Rev. Angela was very knowledgeable in the subject area; yet she was still very humble. It was very easy to relate to her and her experiences. Her teaching style was geared and suited for all learners (both advanced and non-advanced). I really like the vocabulary word of the day. I also liked how we looked at lessons from both a biblical perspective as well as a practical one. Let me not forget to mention the quotes, they were excellent. I cannot wait until I find the time to put the quotes on my wall for positive affirmation. One of the classes that I found in particular intriguing was the class 'Transformation Leads to Alteration.' I liked this class because it really broke down how God develops us and when things do not seem to be going right, He is still developing us. This class taught us about the process that we all have to go through. I also liked the Queries [to Opine]. These queries, forced me to think about what I just learned and how I would implement them in my life.²²⁸

This individual, who is very special to me (in that she was my former counselor many, many years ago when I was on Methadone Maintenance treatment) came and supported my class. She shared the following.

[Regarding 'Progression in Session'] I have attended two of the classes (session seven and nine) I was very inspired by the participants, as well as Reverend Angie. The session entitled 'Knowledge is Critical to the Thought Process' was most enlightening. We worked in two separate groups and shared our individual definitions of the word 'knowledge.' The various definitions were interesting and...helped us to discover new things about ourselves and each other. The Bible verse, 'Therefore my people have gone into captivity because they have no knowledge' (Is 5:13) was very impactful [in one of the lessons]. If we don't acquire knowledge we lose our freedom and our choices become limited. We were also given information on the different ways that we might acquire knowledge from [the book] *The Courage to Teach*...Session nine entitled 'The

²²⁸ Sharon Bradwell, 6/22/12.

Necessary Relationship for Ascending into God's Purpose for your Life' was also inspirational. We learned that we each have an individual relationship with God. The word 'in' has also been used various Bible verses to describe our relationship with God. The verse that impacted me the most is 'I am the vine, and you are the branches He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing.' (Jn 15:5) The 'Progression in Session' classes have helped me to grow spiritually in that I have a much better understanding of God's purpose for me. I have been inspired to take my CASAC exam this fall [after recently attaining my CASAC-T at the urging and encouragement of Rev. Angie] I have also considered obtaining my Master's degree.²²⁹

Another student stated,

I've learned so much from this class already. It is so much different from what I thought it would be. Change is not something to be fearful of, it's just different. I didn't know that the word wisdom was female...from Proverbs 8, and is available to all. Wisdom in Greek means Sophia. Wisdom is the sustenance of the soul."²³⁰ [Some quotes that inspired me were]... 'We can't become what we need to be by remaining what we are'²³¹ and 'Your life doesn't get better by chance, it gets better by change.'²³²

This student wrote her thoughts about the class,

Reverend Angela Ryan approached me one day and asked me to visit a new class designed to help individuals in the recovery process. [The] course objective was to introduce an innovative Recovery program/ministry to the church and the community. It was there I began my stages and phases of transformation. I did not know what to expect from the class, but I've learned so many things. We assessed a session titled 'A Journey with Purpose.' This session had me taking an inventory of what God had created me to do. I found my purpose to [be used for God in the] Dance Ministry. (Jeremiah 29:11) 'For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope.' I understand that it's not about me. My purpose is all about God's plan. I always had a notion I was born by accident. I let that idea run me around for years. To God be the glory, I began showing up for this class. I have learned that God made me for His reasons. God does not make mistakes. God's motive for creating me was His love and nothing else matters. Another

²²⁹ Pam Wainaina, 6/22/12.

²³⁰ Seena Epps, 6/22/12.

²³¹ African American Quotes, Oprah Winfrey, <http://africanamericanquotes.org/education.htm> (Accessed February 26, 2012).

²³² Jim Rohn Quote:
http://thinkexist.com/quotation/you_must_constantly_ask_yourself_these_questions/322162.htm (Accessed February 26, 2012).

session was, ‘The Crucial Tool Needed to Reach your Destiny.’ Prov. 8:4 ‘Wisdom is available to all.’ I realized if you seek knowledge then comes wisdom, I will continue to read, ask questions, and seek truth. Here are some words I learned in class that are now programming my inner thought process; plethora, which means many and sagacious, which means wise. I try to put [these words] to daily use.²³³

Another student wrote,

[I did not know what to expect when signing up for the ‘Progression in Session’ class however,] my goal is to get my degree and pass on what was so graciously given and taught to me, and with the help of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ I will be the best disciple that I can be and share my story, and hope and pray I can help someone.²³⁴

The last student commented,

What did I receive after attending Progression in Session; I learned of people who have had addictions and have recovered, and or maybe still in recovery. They have fought through the struggle to get their lives back on track, through recovery or addiction programs. I learned it is a difficult task to achieve, you’re constantly looked upon as an ‘ADDICT’ or perhaps a person who can’t be trusted, or just plain old ‘Judged.’ Recovery is a great thing, a second chance to learn what not to get into again, if it is taken wholeheartedly. But I also learned, if you don’t change your way of thinking, and change whom your around...you can relapse. Everything is about change. It is expected to go through life constantly changing. It was designed by God, and He likes when we change for the Better.²³⁵

In conclusion, from the cumulative research gathered above, there is a thematic pattern that shows that students gained spiritual and academic growth. In addition, the program contributed significantly to the students’ realization of their educational pursuits as an important component in their recovery process. Most importantly, the course helped students to realize that God has a purpose for their lives and for them to pursue that purpose.

²³³ Veneese Tucker, 6/22/12.

²³⁴ Robin Tomlin, 6/22/12.

²³⁵ Sutana Goldson, 6/22/12.

I am offering into this document additional Qualitative Research by way of the students that I teach at Archway Drug Treatment Center. Several have given me their suggestions for the Church. Please note that these students were not exposed to the “Progression in Session” class that I taught, but they do get an opportunity to have me share Recovery with them from a spiritual/Christian perspective.

One student writes,

[If my voice could be heard] I would tell them to please not judge me (common theme) or look down on me. I would tell them that I am not perfect, and that I need and want their support so that I can become the person God wants me to be. The reason I feel this way is cause I try many other ways, and none of them work. So I will tell them that I surrender and cannot do it by myself.²³⁶

Another student writes,

Many come back to God who have fallen, in despair, beaten up by life's choices and ashamed. We would love to surrender, but don't know how to face our peers. We hesitate even more. Pastors cannot be the only extent of the olive branch. The church as a whole must embrace and meet each individual where they are. As I came back to Christ I never divulged my addictions and past bad habits to my church family. I even felt some of the acts I committed because of my addiction was worse than the addiction itself, But God. As God began to restore me dusting me off I began to value myself again. As I reflect now I can share some of my experiences with lost souls looking to come back home, and new souls that have no clue of God's forgiveness and mercy. All glory goes to God. My future looks bright. I thank Him for a future. My church family supports me, by understanding that we fall down but we get [back] up, embracing me with sincere love and acceptance of my shortcomings lending a helpful ear and [having] genuine concern for the interference in my daily walk (in and out -side of the church). Ever mindful that ‘t's only through God's grace that I am here sober and pressing forward.' I am ever mindful that having the support and fellowship with other saints of God, I can remain clean and focused. I can make it. Every ministry needs an Outreach [ministry] for Drug [addiction], Domestic abuse and Prison Transitions. God is looking for those who are willing to listen and not judge, comfort without condemnation, and pray without ceasing. May God bless us all!²³⁷

²³⁶ Ramone Robles, Take-Home Essay, September 19, 2012.

²³⁷ Myra Johnson, Take-Home Essay, September 12, 2012.

Another student shares,

[If my voice could be heard] I would tell the church addiction is an ugly thing. I'm not proud of that part of my life. God has given me another chance at life. It's only through His grace and mercy that I'm still here, because I've been in some strange places and done some ugly things, and also hurt people who love me. So people of the church, please take and hold me and teach me how to live with God and loving me—help me change my thinking and actions. Again, don't judge me I need to feel comfortable coming through the church doors.²³⁸

Collectively, this secular treatment group that was researched all present the same view through their writing, almost in symphony. The thought that they echo is that they need and want the Church's support.

Qualitative Data: In Class Assignments

As a way for me to gage what the "Progression in Session" students learned over the course of the 12 sessions, I gave them in-class assignments. Each assignment was distributed to students three times (4/20/12, 5/18/12, and 7/13/12) and had three questions for students to answer. In the first question, students had the opportunity to describe their spirituality by choosing one of the following: a) being intimate with God b) knowing that God exists or c) attending church regularly. In the second question, students (willingly) identified their recovery status by describing it as one of the following: a) clean b), one day or more or c) active/life unmanageable. In the third question, students were specifically able to describe their academic status as one of the following: a) some high school b) GED c) high school graduate or d) college degree. Each section had space at the bottom for students to write comments on how they wanted to progress. This (IA, In-Class Assignment) instrument was used as a tool of measurement to show students'

²³⁸ Gina Bason, Take-Home Essay, September 30, 2012.

growth in these areas. I informed students that they were a vital part of this entire project, and that I wanted to take them on the journey with me. For purposes of this Demonstration Project, I have assessed three students' growth by using this (IA) instrument. As you review these selected responses, please know that students filled out consent forms in agreement of their answers being included in this document.

The following are the results of the data. On April 20, 2012, student Sharon Middleton circled b) knows God, regarding spirituality. She circled a) some high school for education. Sharon made a brief comment about recovery, status stating how she wanted to progress, which read "getting more insight on recovery."²³⁹

On May 18, 2012, student Sharon circled a) intimate with God, for spirituality (a sign of growth). She even included the following comments, "I would like to know why I am doing the things I don't like to do and slowly I am learning what the problem is so I can change my attitude..."²⁴⁰ Regarding her recovery status, the student's answer remained a) clean. Sharon circled a) some high school, but on this the second (IA) she made comments stating that she wants to "learn more, go back to school and continue to come to the [“Progression in Session”] class"²⁴¹ Her written words are another indicator of growth.

On 7/13/12, Sharon Middleton circled a) for intimate with God for spirituality. Importantly, Sharon included the following comments in the spirituality section, "I have progressed by understanding that spirituality and education go hand and hand"²⁴² Sharon

²³⁹ Sharon Middleton, In-Class Assignment, April 20, 2012.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., May 18, 2012.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ibid., July 13, 2012.

circled a) again, to represent that she is clean. She also added these comments “I have a renewed mind to go on with furthering my education.”²⁴³ Sharon made the following comments, regarding education, “I have a mind to further my education.”²⁴⁴

The second student selected, Danny Williams, circled nothing for all three questions on the (IA). However, he made the following comments of interest. On April 20, 2012, regarding spirituality Danny stated, “I have found a personal relationship with God and begun to believe and know that God exists in my life today. I attend church every Sunday and I am an usher.”²⁴⁵ Regarding recovery, Danny states, “My clean time is three years and I do it one day at a time. Today I have an active life which I teach, coach, referee basketball games [and] Get closer to God.”²⁴⁶ Regarding education, Danny wrote, “I left school at 11th grade, and I would like to get my GED.”²⁴⁷

On May 18, 2012, the second (IA), Danny circled a) to represent that he is intimate with God (an indication of spiritual growth). In addition, he made the following comments “I would like to be more spiritual and have an intimate relationship with God that I could know what God has for me to do for God. [I want to] learn about the Bible so I can teach the Word.”²⁴⁸ This is a tremendous indication of growth from the first (IA). Regarding his recovery status, Danny circled a) to reflect that he is clean and makes the following statement, “I’ve been in N.A. and I learn how to deal with my

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Danny Williams, In-Class Assignment, April 20, 2012.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., May 18, 2012.

problems with drugs. No matter what I go through I know I don't have to use drugs I just give it to God.”²⁴⁹ To address the education question, Danny circled b) GED (However, my thought is he circled it incorrectly thinking that the GED is what he aspires to attain). Danny's comments are as follows regarding education, “I would like to get my GED and go to college and get a degree so I can have a better income in my life.”²⁵⁰

On the (IA) that was distributed on July 13, 2012, Danny circled b) know God exists “I know God exists that is why I was able to attend the class and be committed. It was God that was able to change me.”²⁵¹ Regarding recovery, Danny circled a) to reflect that he is clean. He wrote the following, “I'm in recovery. It made it a lot easier for me to deal with this class.”²⁵² To elaborate on education, Danny circled b) GED, He made the following comments, “I'm planning on getting my GED.”²⁵³

The third student selected, Andrea Chambers, on April 20, 2012 did not circle any category in any question. She did, however, make the following statements. Regarding spirituality, Andrea wrote, “I want to grow spiritually to know what is my purpose in life...in church and strengthen my faith. I want to come out of my comfort zone and learn to spread God's word to others through [the] evangelism ministry.”²⁵⁴ Regarding recovery, student wrote, “Not in recovery, only recovering to seek God. I want to progress in learning how to relate to others, counseling those who need help with

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid., July 13, 2012.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

everyday life's struggles, with drugs, etc.”²⁵⁵ Regarding education, Andrea wrote, [I am] currently attending the College of New Rochelle studying for social work. I want to progress in my studies. My challenge is with my writing, I need strength in vocabulary.”²⁵⁶

On the (IA) distributed on May 18, 2012, Andrea once again did not circle any category of any question. She did, however make the following comments. “I want to be intertwined with God more and to grow within my spirituality. I know God exists. At times I feel He is not there, but I know He is [there]. I need to find more time to spend with Him to know my purpose in life [that] He wants me to do.”²⁵⁷ This is a powerful indication of spiritual growth from the first (IA) Regarding Andrea’s recovery response, she wrote, “Recovery means many different things. My only issue is letting go of things in my past, that’s what I need to be recovered from. [I’ve] never been addicted, however, addicted to keeping things in my mind when I’ve been hurt.²⁵⁸ Andrea’s response to education question is as follows, “[I am] attending the College of New Rochelle for my B.A. in social work. I want to progress [from] achieving my B.A. to owning my own business, and also working in the field of social work for the elderly. I love to work with sick mental adults/ children.”²⁵⁹ On July 13, 2012, Andrea was given an (IA). She made a circled response for the first time a) to indicate she is intimate with God. She adds the following comments, “I [have] progressed since taking this [“Progression in Session”]

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., May 18, 2012.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

class, by accepting my purpose God has for me. I am more thirsty for God's word and my purpose, and to help others to know who God is.”²⁶⁰ This is a giant leap in spiritual growth. Andrea did not circle any other category for any other question. She did, however, make the following comments. Student wrote regarding her recovery, “I am not in recovery. However, I have learned how to delete some people out of my life, but still struggle with some issues in my life and with my daughter.”²⁶¹ Andrea’s comment regarding education stated, [I am] “Attending college now. Focusing on continuing my education to another level with each degree I will achieve.”²⁶² As the instructor, I see academic growth by Andrea displaying faith in her future goals. This is a demonstration of progressive educational aspirations from the April 20, 2012 (IA).

Important to note, the July 13, 2012 (IA) had two yes/no questions added to gain additional information. These questions were: did students want the class taught again, and would they enroll in it again. All three of the selected students answered yes to both of these questions. (See Appendix AA, In-Class Assignments)

Student Evaluations of Instructor: Quantitative Data

Informatively, during the course the students of “Progression in Session” were also given Student Evaluation Forms (SEF) to assess my teaching skills and style. In describing the instrument of evaluation that was used, it had 17 questions (14 of the questions were to be rated on a scale of 1-5, and three of the questions were determined by yes or no answers). By way of explanation, the SEF was given in two points in time. The first SEF was given to students on May 18, 2012, and the second was distributed on

²⁶⁰ Ibid., July 13, 2012.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Ibid.

July 13, 2012. The SEF was adapted from the student evaluation forms used at the College of New Rochelle (See Appendix BB, Student Evaluation Form). In terms of results of the students' evaluation, the maximum score or highest rating that any instructor could get was a 70 (14 questions x 5 the highest rating 70). The minimum score one could get was a 14 (1 the lowest score x 14 questions 4). I received a 69.2 as the average score on the SEF on the first date it was given (11 students were in the class that evening to fill out the SEF). On the second date that students filled out SEF, my score was 69.0 (14 students were in class to fill out SEF). To briefly summarize these evaluations, in terms of the way students felt about my competency, proficiency, and aptitude as an instructor (in both of them) I was very close to the maximum score. In terms of the three yes/no questions, 100% of the "Progression in Session" students felt that "I was an instructor that showed commitment to improving students' communicative skills/writing, speaking and reading. They also would recommend that the "Progression in Session" course be taught again and, in addition would recommend that I be the one to teach the class."²⁶³ These student evaluations met the requirement for Goal 1 Strategy 4 on the original Plan of Implementation of Chapter 3. Site Team member Dr. Howard Fogel was extremely helpful in analyzing this statistical data collected by students.

Archway Project

While I was in the process of writing my Demonstration Project Proposal, I was given an opportunity to chart the spiritual growth of persons in recovery at Archway Treatment Center. While volunteering at this secular treatment program, I taught Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Life*. I gave the students a spirituality scale that was made up

²⁶³ Student Comments from Evaluation Form.

of 6 questions. It was adapted from the Galanter Spirituality and Addiction scale. In an article written in the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* it was reported that,

The prominence of Twelve-Step programs has led to increased attention on the putative role of spirituality in recovery from addictive disorders. We developed a 5-item Spirituality Self-Rating Scale designed to reflect a global measure of spiritual orientation to life, and we demonstrated here its internal consistency reliability in substance abusers on treatment and in non-substance abusers. This scale and the measures related to recovery from addiction and treatment response were applied in three diverse treatment settings: a general hospital inpatient psychiatry service, a residential therapeutic community, and methadone maintenance programs. Findings on these patient groups were compared to responses given by undergraduate college students, medical students, addiction faculty, and chaplaincy trainees. These suggest that, for certain patients, spiritual orientation is an important aspect of their recovery. Furthermore, the relevance of this issue may be underestimated in the way treatment is framed in a range of clinical facilities.²⁶⁴

In the study I did, the scale had six questions and the lowest possible score one could get was five. The highest score was 30 (because the SQ had six questions ranging from 1-5). The mean score of the pre-test was 22.7. (13 people took the pre-test). The post-test score was 26. (12 people took the post-test). In distributing the SQ I wanted to ascertain how spirituality would affect individuals in recovery. As an outcome of my teaching (and as can be seen from the results above) spirituality has an effective and positive impact on persons in the recovering population. Dr. Howard Fogel (Site Team member) was very helpful in the following analysis of this study. SQ chart on next page is available for your review. There have been discussions about us doing another study of this type with the evening group to chart long-term growth.

²⁶⁴ Marc Galanter et al., “Assessment of Spirituality and Its Relevance to Addiction Treatment,” *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* 33 (2007), 257-264.

Table 3: Pre-Post Spirituality Self-Rating Scale Scores

	<u>Pre-Test Scores</u>	<u>Post-Test Scores</u>
Mean	22.69	26.00
SD	7.66	4.59
N	13	12

CHAPTER 7

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT IN THE WORLD: NEXT STEPS

“Therefore, my beloved..., be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor.15:58)

As I approach the culmination of writing for this Demonstration Project, I would be remiss if I did not include both the ways that I could have fine-tuned the project, as well as the many futuristic visions God has given me regarding the “Progression in Session” program. This includes things that I could have done differently, ways the program could have been improved, and challenges I faced.

Here is an example of one of the things I could have done differently. In sharing the program with clergy members of the community, I attended and spoke at the United Black Clergy Meeting on May 19, 2012. The United Black Clergy is a coalition of community-minded ministers that concentrate on social justice issues. My sharing with them could be considered as quite “a learning experience and an opportunity to meet with church leaders for a specific intention.” During the meeting, I spoke about my Demonstration Project’s Challenge Statement and highlighted the fact that there was only one Recovery Ministry in Mt. Vernon. This statement was interpreted non-favorably by some in the meeting. Many Pastors felt that they do for persons in recovery, by opening their doors to NA, AA, and by other means. My statement was never intended to criticize the tremendous work that the church does as a whole, but rather to bring to the table another option for people in this population. I was presenting an innovative solution as a treatment option. The presentation was meant to be an open dialogue for the churches to

consider how they can better serve people in recovery. Pastor Moore, president of the UCB at the time, helped me to understand that language is important when presenting. In the future, I will use a better style of communicating the facts. In this case, I learned that it's not what you present, but how you present it especially considering who are presenting it to. It should be noted that this group of clergy has been very supportive of my efforts throughout this project. I was grateful for this learning experience, and will make use of it at a later time.

Regarding an example of something I could have done differently, as a way of being more technically advanced, I would include at least two of the classes of "Progression in Session" to be viewed by video. Everybody learns differently, some are more visual than others. "It is of utmost importance that we recognize and nurture all of the varied human intelligences, and all of the combination of intelligences. We are all so different because we all have different combinations of intelligences."²⁶⁵ Therefore, I would include a visual component of the lesson.

One of the challenges that I faced was balancing my ministerial duties, teaching "Progression in Session," and writing my thesis. Since the program had its successful completion on July 13, 2012, I had to unfortunately and reluctantly delay teaching the next series of sessions. This was due to my having to begin my thesis writing, and my determination to give the writing the level of commitment it needed. Currently, there is no holistic Recovery program being offered for persons in recovery at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, which continues to limit the number of programs in the community of Mt. Vernon. On a personal note, that bothers me. Moreover, since the class ended, I

²⁶⁵ Thomas Armstrong, *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* (Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD, 2000), 1.

have constantly been asked, when will I be teaching another class? All I can answer is, “As God gives direction, I am prepared to teach ‘Progression in Session’ again at the church.”

In agreement with this project (and as God gives direction), I am also willing to give oversight to churches in helping them to develop Recovery programs such as “Progression in Session.” Specifically, when I submitted my Demonstration Project Proposal, I wanted to see in relation and synchronicity with this Doctoral project, the A.M.E. Zion Church adopt into the Discipline (the instrument for setting forth the laws, plan, polity, and process by which the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church governs itself)²⁶⁶ at the 2012 General Conference, which is “the supreme body of the A.M.E. Zion Church”²⁶⁷, and where The Bishops preside in rotation²⁶⁸ the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION #

CATEGORY: Education (holistic transformation)

TITLE: The Responsibility the Church has in the Lives of People with Past & Present Addictions

WHEREAS, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church from its inception has fought for emancipation, regeneration, and transformation of its church and its members – identifying itself as the “freedom church”; and

WHEREAS, Traditionally, issues of slavery, humiliation, persecution, and oppression have been interpreted as unfair and repulsive to our founders; and

WHEREAS, Churches across Zion (locally and across the Diaspora) are being integrated with members who have had a history (or current issue) with addiction challenges; and

²⁶⁶ *The Book of Discipline*, ii.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 35.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 39.

WHEREAS, According to the World Health Organization's data and statistics at least 15.3 million persons have drug use disorders²⁶⁹; and

WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated in His ministry that Pastors/Ministers have a mandate to meet the needs of this population in their communities by teaching, equipping, and empowering "the least of these"(all as a part of doing social gospel ministry); and

WHEREAS, the formulaic scripture Romans 12:2 "Be Ye Transformed by the Renewing of your Mind" is the spiritual prescription for the release of those enslaved with addiction issues.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT: The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (whether large or small) will provide in its churches a curriculum that addresses the intentional holistic upheaval of persons with addiction issues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT: Ministers/professionals in the field and individuals with experience and training will agree to develop a viable curriculum and to offer themselves as coordinators of the programs in local churches to meet the needs of this population both spiritually and emotionally giving back to God, what was so freely given to them.

Submitted By: Rev. Angela Ryan

2012 General Conference

To God be the glory, on July 25, 2012, I had my first opportunity ever to attend a General Conference of the A.M.E. Zion Church, which meets every four years. The 49th General Conference was held in Charlotte, North Carolina. It was held at the Charlotte Civic Center, 510 South College Street. This conference was significant to me for several reasons. First, my pastor (who is my father in the ministry) was running for one of the three open seats of Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church. God had ordained his elevation and it was important for me, and many others to be there to support his approach to elevation. After all, this is the man who has, kept the shell of "the egg"

²⁶⁹ World Health Organization, Health Topics, Substance Abuse, http://www.who.int/topics/substance_abuse/en/ (Accessed October 20, 2011).

(through the Holy Spirit) from cracking for all the members of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church.

Another reason that my attending the conference was important to me was that, the above resolution that I submitted was being considered for legislation into the law of our church. The day before I arrived, I received word from one of the delegates (Sis. Faye Fagan who worked in Christian Education in our church for many, many years) stating that the resolution I submitted was listed in the Book of Resolutions. She also wanted me to be made aware that my resolution was submitted to the committee under her name, and not mine. Since I had some concerns as to why this had happened, Pastor Moore explained to me that only delegates could submit resolutions to the General Conference. Therefore, her name was the only name on the document. Sis Fagan stated that she submitted the resolution with both of our names on it. I found this matter to be somewhat challenging, but gave it over to God. When I arrived in Charlotte, the next day I was able to obtain a Resolutions Committee sheet and learn that my resolution was found with merit and given a number (GC49-R30-2012). The Resolution was to go through a proper process to determine approval. (See Appendix CC, How A Resolution Becomes Law, *Star of Zion*, June 2012)

Significantly, the General Conference began with a worship service that included the sacrament of the Holy Communion. Directly afterward, the business sessions began, and continued in succession on a daily basis. In an interested way, I sat listening to many resolutions that were discussed, debated, and doubted. As the process went along, many resolutions had to go to the Revisions Committee and be brought back before the floor for consideration. Time was having its own way, and when one understands time

properly, time really belongs to God. Therefore, one day passed, another day eased by, and then on Saturday, July 21, 2012, late in the evening, time had the totality of the moment. The above resolution, which was embedded within the pages of my Demonstration Project Proposal, was brought to the floor with several others and to God be the glory, was approved into legislation of the A.M.E. Zion Church. Clearly, the Resolution's approval may not have made much of an impact on anyone else on the room that evening, but for me, the one who God had used in her room that day to write the resolution, I felt a touch from the Lord confirming that He will use ordinary people to facilitate extraordinary things, that will bless ordinary people. In essence, God uses these everyday people on His behalf.

In my first quarterly conference report to Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church (the local church), I thanked the A.M.E. Zion Church at large, especially the delegates and bishops, for seeing a need for (and approving) the resolution. The most exciting thing to occur at the 49th General Conference was that Pastor William Darin Moore was elected on the second ballot to become the 99th Bishop in succession of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. He has provides Episcopal leadership over the Western Conference of our church. *The Star of Zion* (official voice of the A.M. E. Zion Church) reported, "After 28 ballots, the road to the episcopacy finally ended...The Right Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore...has ministered the Gospel of Christ so that others may come to know the Lord, to love His word, and to become equipped for the ministry of reconciliation. He has come to embody John Maxwell's essentials of leadership vision, ability, and integrity. Bishop Moore and his wife, now Missionary Supervisor Deveita Moore, have both been elevated by God. She serves in the same episcopal area with her

husband. I am so much better of an individual for having been loved by both of them, as are the entire Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church family.

Futuristic Implementation of “Progression in Session”

Similar to how you have read in the previous pages that the project “*Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session*” class influenced students at the Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church in a positive way, now through the decision at the 49th General Conference many other lives can be impacted in the world for the better. I added a special thanks to Sis. Faye Fagan, who as God would have it, was my Home Economics teacher in junior high school many years ago. My teaching the “Progression in Session” class at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church and other churches is the fulfillment of the contents within the Resolution I submitted.

Regarding further development of “Progression in Session” from a community perspective, I have the following thoughts. With the course being, spiritual/holistic in nature, I feel confident that it is also geared to be taught in a secular treatment setting. This could successfully be done with some revisions and editing to the spiritual content of the syllabus and curriculum. Modifications such as these would only be necessary due to church and state issues which are very apparent in some facilities. Taking the “Progression in Session” class would offer clients benefits of educational and emotional upheaval. Individuals would be propelled to want to enter a relationship with God in whatever way they choose. My thought is, since I already volunteer at St. John’s Riverside Hospital, Archway Clinic (once a week) I am in prayer as to offer this particular clinic to be the first Treatment Center to run the “Progression in Session” course after completion of my Dissertation.

Regarding the “Progression in Session” program and the youth, I would be interested in training this population at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, which currently has a tremendous youth ministry, and other churches youths to be prepared to meet the next generation that comes into our churches addicted. Training options could involve youth attending the “Progression in Session” classes for observations, or my meeting with a group of the youth separately to train. This is a well thought-out means of intervention that the church can offer today’s youth an alternative option of youth living a life of misery, which could eventually land them in prison. Our youth must see that we want to invest in their futures at all costs!

In addition, I would also be interested in teaching “Progression in Session” as a course in Seminary to help prepare pastors, clergy, and church leaders on how to help persons that come into their churches with past and present addictions. Interestingly, Dale Ryan who is with, “The National Association for Christian Recovery a not-for-profit religious organization whose passion is the cultivation and growth of recovery communities”²⁷⁰ made the following statement.

Some people say that pastors and lay leaders should be trained primarily to deal with the unavoidables of life, since those are probably the issues that most people struggle with, and that we should leave things like addiction and abuse for specialists. That’s what I thought when I was in seminary. And it would make sense if crisis and grief were common but addiction and abuse were rare. Tragically, the evidence suggests otherwise. Addiction is not just a problem for the street drunks downtown. I am convinced that addiction is the most common struggle faced by people in most churches—and for that matter, in most communities.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ The National Association for Christian Recovery, “About: Our Story,” Theological Education and Recovery, <http://www.nacr.org/about-our-story> (Accessed December 2, 2012).

²⁷¹ The National Association for Christian Recovery, 11/1/12.

Being in agreement, I believe churches must prepare clergy to understand the recovering population. Many denominations require ministers to attend seminary as part of their ordination process. Therefore, the academy could be the starting place of learning for ministers (deacons, elders, etc.), helping them to learn how to first love this population with the love of Jesus. These people of the cloth can, in addition, become trained to edify and educate this population. A course such as this can be beneficial to those of various denominations or faiths (again with some modification) since drug addiction does not discriminate. The program that God allowed me to design and teach offers persons in recovery two specific areas (spirituality defined as a growing relationship with God, and education), leading to spiritual transformation. Assumably, other faiths could generate similar programs. The point is for the houses of worship to offer help to this population.

Furthermore, in the future God is leading me to open a school for people in recovery (similar to a charter school). Recovery type work is going to be my life's work. Along my journey, it will be of utmost importance for me to "find like-minded individuals."²⁷² It is suggested in such an effort as opening a charter school of any type to, "Start with a small core team of founders who share a common goal for the charter school." Although this may not happen in the near future, nothing is impossible with God. I have the passion of God to continue doing the work God called me to do. Therefore, "being confident of this very thing that He who began a good work in me is faithful to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil:1:6) I set my face like flint (with determination) to accomplish the purpose for which God has sent me to do.

²⁷² Sue Douglass Fiess, "How to Start a Charter School"
http://www.education.com/magazine/article/How_Start_Charter_School/ (Accessed November 26, 2012).

Regarding “Progression in Session” and how the program can be used for purposes of spiritual healing, I write the following. I would like to one day (based on grants and funding) to open a 12-week spiritual recovery/education Retreat Center as an optional treatment for individuals in recovery to attend. In this endeavor, I would hope to help as many people as I could. Education and spirituality being the means of treatment in recovery is not a traditional methodology. If a work therapy/spiritual program, such as the Salvation Army can have positive effects, if Twelve Steps are beneficial, then I am confident that a well thought-out and planned holistic program can be an additional option for a population that deserves options for their struggles.

As a means of social justice, the “Progression in Session” program will also be apropos to be taught in a prison as an academic course. I serve as the Assistant Minister of the Prison Ministry at Greater Centennial. This is another transformative ministry. Once a month, our team travels to Valhalla Correctional facility to bring a full worship service to incarcerated men and women. Many of these men and woman are ashamed, broken, and are often Christless when we meet them. However, God causes transformation to occur (either from the preached word, the prayers, the praise and worship songs, or the testimonies given during our ministry visit). Our team gets the opportunity to see spiritual transformation every time we go to the prison, because men and women make the courageous move (stepping out of Satan’s hands) to give their lives to Christ. In giving their lives to Christ, these men and women repent. “The Greek word for ‘repentance’ is *metanoia* (meaning to change one’s mind). People in their right minds take responsibility for what they have done that is hurtful and offensive. They take ownership for whatever impact their sin and stupidity have had on others. They seek

forgiveness.”²⁷³ For one to see grown men standing with tears in their eyes, or hardened women being broken down simply by the love and mercy of God is transformative in itself (in that it reminds the viewer of God’s grace). I have often said that grace is given not to people who need it or want it, but essentially grace is specifically given to those who clearly *do not* deserve it.

Insightfully, education equals liberation. Spirituality, at best, brings about reconciliation, which equates to transformation. A “Progression in Session” class offered in prison is another means of liberation helping incarcerated individuals feel a sense of spiritual justification.

By way of my own life, one who was in jail for a very short time twice, when I lived a dysfunctional life in the caterpillar stage, I must intentionally reiterate that transformation is a process, and God is in charge of one’s process. No matter where these individuals are at in their process of transformation it is important for me as a transformational leader to meet people right where they are, and to ‘raise the consciousness in [these] individuals,’²⁷⁴ so that they can see the transformative power of Jesus Christ and receive His power in their own lives, at their own pace. It has been stated, “The way you really bring people to a place of transformation is to allow them to come to their own conclusion.”

I’ve come to the conclusion that people who use drugs and/or are incarcerated are very intelligent. They simply have a disease, or have made mistakes. They are still God’s people and must be loved.

²⁷³ Peter Steinke, 88.

²⁷⁴ Peter Northouse, 182.

Moreover, with God allowing me to have such a transformed life, it would be a tremendous blessing for me to be able to inspire students who are discouraged to stay in school. I could do this by sharing my story and journey. One never knows what measure of positive intervention it takes to turn a mind around. Rather than wasting time on debate or debunking the idea on whether or not communication should take place, when unfortunate opportunities arise (such as when youth start cutting class, when mothers don't know what to do, when children start experimenting with drugs and alcohol, or when they start drifting from positive values that being taught in the home), I'd like to be used by God to share my many mistakes. I'd like to encourage youth to stay in school, and share with them this academic journey.

I conclude this Doctoral project with the following words to the One Who made it all possible. Thank you, Lord, for choosing me before the foundation of the world. Despite everything You saw and knew about me before You created me in Your Mind, You still found me worthy to fulfill and accomplish Your purpose by achieving this Doctorate of Ministry Degree. "Oh God, you are my God..." (Psalm 63 NKJV) Without You I'm nothing. Since surrendering my life to You, and returning to school You have been the thinking in my thoughts, and the Words in every assignment. You have been the dialogue in my oratory presentations, and the questions I seek to understand. When I struggle with the computer or aspects of technology You have overshadowed, overpowered, and overcame them in order for me to get Your work done. Thank You! You sent every person to significantly shape my academic and spiritual growth and development. Moreover, You are the love that I show others, the songs I sing, and the joy I consistently have. It was You who gave me the faith to believe your promise of years

past, despite having many difficult days of discouragement, disappointments, and distractions. All through my spiritual journey You have kept me focused on You and Your purpose for my life, never desiring to go back to being a caterpillar, but pressing to go further and to fly into Your purpose.

Finally, you, the reader, should know that now that I have “really transacted business with God on His covenant and have let go entirely, there is no sense of merit, no human ingredient in it at all, but a complete overwhelming sense of being brought into [closer] union with God, and the whole [project] is transfigured and [transformed, and presented to God] with peace and joy.”²⁷⁵ The peace for me is comprehending that I’ve done what the Lord asked me to do on His behalf, the joy comes in me knowing by faith that I remain in God’s will.

I am fully aware that “Progression in Session” is God’s project, for God’s people who struggle. God just used me as a vessel with vision. Because of God, all who were a part of the project have the victory! We will now venture on to the next phase or stage together! Never leave your vision (God gives you) behind let it lead you.

²⁷⁵ Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest* (Urichsville, Ohio: Barbour & Co, 1935), 254.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

STAGES AND PHASES OF TRANSFORMATION: THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT PLACES OF WORSHIP HAVE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH PAST AND PRESENT ADDICTIONS

By

ANGELA RYAN

DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

New York Theological Seminary

January 9, 2012

Challenge Statement

As an Associate Minister of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y. and a thirty-five-year substance abuse survivor, the following statistics alarm me. Out of 68,000²⁷⁶ residents in Mt. Vernon, less than 2% have sought professional treatment for addictions.²⁷⁷ Less than 1% of those in treatment seek it from a church program. Of the city's five largest churches, there is only one Recovery Ministry providing holistic treatment. If this problem is not addressed, those with past and present addictions will never look to the Church as viable means of recovery. This Demonstration Project will design a transformational Recovery Ministry at Greater Centennial with the intent to duplicate the design in other churches.

²⁷⁶U.S. Census Bureau, State & County QuickFax, (Mt. Vernon, New York), <http://quickfax.census.gov> (Accessed October 19, 2011).

²⁷⁷Gary Dollard, Admissions to NYS OASAS CD Treatment Programs, Mt. Vernon Residents Admissions, CY 2010.

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CHAPTER 1 **THE EGG: INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING**

Reflection upon Church Structure

“A man asked God for two things: a plant, which has beautiful and colorful flowers, and a butterfly to add beauty to his small potted garden. However, instead of a flowering plant, God presented him with a cactus plant and a caterpillar. The man was surprised, because he had asked for one thing and God gave him something else. After many days, the cactus bloomed and in the place of the caterpillar, there was a beautiful and stunning butterfly.”²⁷⁸ A butterfly undergoes four stages or phases in the process of transformation (also known as a metamorphosis). The first stage is “the egg.”²⁷⁹ The second stage is the “larva”²⁸⁰ (or chrysalis). “The larva of the butterfly is called a caterpillar. The larva develops inside the egg and nourishes on the yolk of the egg...”²⁸¹ The third phase is the “pupa”²⁸² (a transformation takes place within the pupa). The body parts of the caterpillar [then] disintegrate to form the body parts of the butterfly. The fourth and final stage is the emergence of the “adult butterfly.”²⁸³ Insightfully,

²⁷⁸ Butterfly Metamorphosis, <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/butterfly-metamorphosis.html> (Accessed May 20, 2011).

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Ibid.

The hardened chrysalis cracks and the butterfly emerges from it. The wings of the butterfly are small and wet. It clings onto the shell of the chrysalis. At this juncture, a life-saving fluid known as hemolymph is pumped into the body of the butterfly. Hemolymph spreads slowly throughout the body and the wings. This helps in enlarging the wings and the body of the butterfly. Remember that the wings are wet and the butterfly is unable to fly. However, within an hour, the wings become dry and the butterfly is ready to fly.²⁸⁴

Informatively, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church (the egg/or incubator of my spiritual life) is located in the urban community of Mt. Vernon, New York. Presently, it is erected on the corner of Eighth Avenue and Fourth Street. Directly across the street, in the front of the church on the Fourth Street side stands *The Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center*, a clinic that provides individuals with “physical healing.” Picturesquely, also on the Fourth Street side, but positioned diagonally across the street to the right, is a low-income housing project called *Levister Towers*, a 497-unit complex,²⁸⁵ which has its own playground for tenants. Also surrounding the close proximity of the church, on Eighth and Ninth Avenues, beautiful private homes array the streets with assorted architectural styles. Importantly, *The Greater Centennial Homes*, which is a completed and birthed vision of former pastor Belvie H. Jackson, is located within these blocks. Many in the congregation live in these buildings. Essentially, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church provides “spiritual healing” that reaches the entire circumference of the community.

Reflection upon Mission/Ministry

Unapologetically, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is a church that demonstrates an abundance of love. Moreover, it should be understood that the church is

²⁸⁴ Ibid., (Accessed August 31, 2011).

²⁸⁵ Housing, Mount Vernon, “Paying Low Rent but at an Inflated Risk,” <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/07/nyregion/westchester/07tenantswe.html> (Accessed October 20, 2011).

dedicated to the transformation of individuals and communities. By way of mission, “Greater Centennial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is a congregation of believers called by God to provide a holistic ministry to our community. We are committed to sharing the message of liberation proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism, fellowship, and the advocating of spiritual, educational, and economic empowerment of all people.”²⁸⁶ The church has actualized our mission statement over the years in several substantial ways. In particular, we became involved in school board elections, housing realities, had a congregational protest of Con Edison running a gas pipeline through our community, fought peacefully to keep Mount Vernon Hospital open (which would have been a NYS Hospital injustice if it closed), created Westchester One in Praise (an intentional joining of choirs from different denominations for specific worship events), established small group Bible studies, and our most recent endeavor – the constructing of Greater Centennial’s Belvie & Shirley Jackson Family Life Center that is designed for personal, professional, spiritual, and physical development of our members and those in the community.

Over the years, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, which is primarily African American in its identity, has experienced significant changes in the congregation’s ministry, mission, programs, and spirituality. The most noticeable shift over the last 12 years in the church’s metamorphosis process can be seen in the persistent “growth in membership.” In a profound way, “Membership has doubled, with our

²⁸⁶ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, “Who are we? Mission,” <http://www.greatercentennial.org> (Accessed May 11, 2011).

congregation receiving 400-plus new members annually.²⁸⁷ There has also been a constant increase in “treasure” from those becoming a part of the church, with many members bringing their “tithe and offerings into the storehouse” (Mal 3:10 NKJV). In addition, a large percentage of members have committed to help build the Family Life Center by making pledges of sacrificial giving. Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church has also been blessed to see a perpetual rise in “leadership development” through additional ministries. Addressing this more specifically, we currently have over 60 ministries²⁸⁸, 13 have been established over the last ten years.²⁸⁹ David’s Kitchen, Greater Hope and Healing, and A Greater Way of Life Recovery Ministry are just a few of the most recent that target populations with specific needs. Moreover, the ministerial staff at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has grown tremendously, reaching the number of 29.²⁹⁰ With this number being so vast, the church has been able to be a “ministry supply pool for other churches.”²⁹¹

Also important to note, Greater Centennial A. M.E. Zion Church has shifted concurrently with society’s “new cultural language.”²⁹² In other words, the church is presently in sync with the current information age and taking full advantage of and exercising a greater use of “technology.” Much different from years past, our services

²⁸⁷ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 13, 2011.

²⁸⁸ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 13, 2011.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Greater Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church, “Church Bulletin,” Two new local preachers were added to the bulletin (September 2011).

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Len Wilson, *The Wired Church* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1999), 31.

can be seen on “live stream” via the Internet. Vividly, ministers gifted in technology minister during the services by “chatting” with those who are viewing. Also, these unique digitalized services allow sermon notes to be simultaneously portrayed on screen in the sanctuary, while The Word of God is being preached on Sundays and during Bible study. The pastor also has a monthly Blog page “to discuss pertinent Greater Centennial topics, current events, and answer questions.”²⁹³ Fortunately, all of the church events are announced via our web page, and the church is on Facebook as well as Twitter.

Interestingly, in the church’s effort to do things in a more excellent way, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has also upgraded the quality of its sound equipment, which enhanced the quality of worship tremendously. The individual and collective tones from each of the “seven choirs”²⁹⁴ now effectively ring out and reach the epitome of a crescendo in the hearts of the hearers; this is also true of the preached word.

Significantly, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has also matured greatly over the years in the area of economic development. It is important for you, the reader, to know that, “The church is leading the community by investing or sponsoring over \$26 million in housing development.”²⁹⁵ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has provided 16 two-family homes known as the James Varick Homes. The church has also successfully completed the renovation of the current Greater Centennial Homes, which is a 157-unit housing project, and is currently revitalizing 26 apartments, which have been named Varick Court in honor of Zion’s first bishop, James Varick, and are intended for middle-

²⁹³ Greater Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church, “Church Bulletin,” Join me every month on “Pastors Blog,” May 25, 2011.

²⁹⁴ Ministries (Praise and Worship), <http://www.greatercentennial.org> (Accessed May 14, 2011).

²⁹⁵ Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore, Pastor, A.M.E. Zion Church Sunday Morning Service, May 15, 2011.

income families.

Regarding the increase of the spirituality of our members, I have the following thoughts. Unquestionably, over the years, there have been many programs and many openings for leadership within our church, which certainly can be acknowledged as contributing to members' spiritual growth. Significantly, I also hold as a reason for the enormous spiritual growth of many persons in the congregation – the persistent passionate preaching of our pastor. However, as one must admit, opportunities such as the ones I've just stated are not the only basis for charting spiritual growth. While I believe that Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church is the greatest church, I sequentially believe that the spiritual growth of its members and the church as a collective body can improve immensely by the church becoming stronger in the area of corporate prayer. It has been indicated that "No ministry can succeed [spiritually] without much praying."²⁹⁶ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church has 5,556 members²⁹⁷, and only about 10 to 15 members who come to prayer meetings regularly. At present, prayer is emphasized from the pulpit on Sunday mornings, on the morning-prayer line for 15 minutes, and administratively during the Lenten season. Realistically, there is a plethora that the church is attempting to do in building up the kingdom of God. Considering the large amount of members that we have and the multitude of issues that members deal with, a church of our size would benefit greatly by emphasizing prayer more. I feel that if all the ministries had a stronger element of prayer attached to them, the spirituality of the members and the church itself would increase. It is one thing if the world has an attitude

²⁹⁶ E.M. Bounds, *Power through Prayer* (Pennsylvania: Whitaker House, 1982), 41.

²⁹⁷ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 16, 2011.

about not praying. However, I'm inclined to ask, "What does God say when the church (God's church) does not increase its measures to put prayer as a high priority?" Jesus Himself said, "It is written in the Scriptures, My House *is* the House of prayer." (Luke 19:46 KJV). The church cannot continue feeding itself from the business of doing ministry without being intentional about moving to our next spiritual phase, but we as a church must outgrow our skin (molt)²⁹⁸ as the caterpillar does. In preparation for all that we as Christians will face on our journey, it is our spiritual obligation to become strong prayer warriors. Our church simply must become stronger in this discipleship building area. As one of the Assistant Ministers of Discipleship at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, I am not only concerned, but also feel a sense of commitment and compassion about helping to strengthen the Prayer Ministry. The entire spiritual direction of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church (inclusive of children, youth, and adults) can be affected in a positive way and the outcome – increase.

The significant factors that have shaped the ministry, mission, and spirituality of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church can be attributed to "the dynamic leadership of our gifted pastor/preacher, The Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore. He has had a willingness to decentralize authority and distribute it, creating an atmosphere for more leadership from laity – along with a willingness to share it with other churches."²⁹⁹

Regarding specific conflict, our church recently shifted from Bible Institute classes, which focused on spiritual discipleship issues (i.e., prayer, prophets, Bible 101,

²⁹⁸ Butterfly Metamorphosis, <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/butterfly-metamorphosis.html> (Accessed May 20, 2011).

²⁹⁹ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 16, 2011.

women in the Bible) to our weekly G.L.A.D. (Growing, Learning, Anointed, Disciples) classes, which are small group Bible studies. These classes were seen as a threat to Bible Institute, which subsequently are no longer an option for the members to take advantage of. Many individuals wanted to take these focused classes but could not. G.L.A.D. classes also intimidated and ran away the class leader system, which ran counter to the G.L.A.D. classes (in other ways). Not necessarily a conflict, but clearly one of the challenges around ministry that Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church has experienced over the years is moving from one to three services. We went from having one service at 11:00 a.m. to holding three services (7:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 12 p.m.) all at which our pastor primarily preaches. This decision to move to more services was due to logistics and member increase.

Admittedly, our church falls short in some areas. It is our sincere intention to create viable access for the handicapped (via ramp). Once again, we as a church continue to “grow void of intentional teaching and practice of corporate and personal prayer.”³⁰⁰

In specific, I would like to see in relation and synchronicity with this Doctoral project, the A.M.E Zion Church adopt into the Discipline (the instrument for setting forth the laws, plan, polity, and process by which the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church governs itself)³⁰¹ at the 2012 General Conference, which is “the supreme body of the A.M.E. Zion Church”³⁰², and where The Bishops preside in rotation³⁰³) the following Resolution:

³⁰⁰ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 16, 2011.

³⁰¹ *The Book of Discipline*, A.M.E. Zion Publishing House (2008), ii.

³⁰² Ibid., 35.

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION #

CATEGORY: Education (holistic transformation)

TITLE: The Responsibility the Church has in the Lives of People with Past & Present Addictions

WHEREAS, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church from its inception has fought for emancipation, regeneration, and transformation of its church and its members – identifying itself as the “freedom church”; and

WHEREAS, Traditionally, issues of slavery, humiliation, persecution, and oppression have been interpreted as unfair and repulsive to our founders; and

WHEREAS, Churches across Zion (locally and across the Diaspora) are being integrated with members who have had a history (or current issue) with addiction challenges; and

WHEREAS, According to the World Health Organization’s data and statistics at least 15.3 million persons have drug use disorders³⁰⁴; and

WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated in His ministry that Pastors/Ministers have a mandate to meet the needs of this population in their communities by teaching, equipping, and empowering “the least of these”(all as a part of doing social gospel ministry); and

WHEREAS, the formulaic scripture Romans 12:2 “Be Ye Transformed by the Renewing of your Mind” is the spiritual prescription for the release of those enslaved with addiction issues.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, THAT: The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (whether large or small) will provide in its churches a curriculum that addresses the intentional holistic upheaval of persons with addiction issues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT: Ministers/professionals in the field and individuals with experience and training will agree to develop a viable curriculum and to offer themselves as coordinators of the programs in local churches to meet the needs of this population both spiritually and emotionally giving back to God, what was so freely given to them.

Submitted By: Rev. Angela Ryan

³⁰³ Ibid., 39.

³⁰⁴ Substance Abuse Health Topic, http://www.who.int/topics/substance_abuse/en/ (Accessed October 20, 2011).

Explicitly, I would also like to see Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church and the new Family Life Center become a refuge and restoration place for those with past and present addictions. I want the church to be intentional about providing essential needs that cover spirituality, education, temporal, and the overall holistic needs that equate to the “total transformation” of the recovering population. The current Recovery Ministry does not receive adequate support. Members in this population can be better served if there is proper preparation for them by way of programs, provision of resources, and persons who have passion to both love and teach them. It is also essential that the church, inclusive of its leadership at all levels be able to *understand* individuals who are in their process of being delivered from drug addiction – at whatever stage or phase individuals are at. My hope is that the outcome of this dissertation will provide that kind of information for clergy.

I also envision a re-entry program for prisoners at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. The reason that the church does not currently have one is because the primary efforts over the last few years have been going towards erecting the Family Life Center. However, such a program is in consideration for the future.

Reflection upon Theological Commitment

Most importantly, the theological commitments of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church can be understood by “the centrality of Jesus Christ as Savior and as living God.”³⁰⁵ In addition, the A.M.E. Denomination as a whole believes in the Holy Trinity.³⁰⁶ In essence, the cultural and social commitments of our congregation can be

³⁰⁵ Interview with Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore, Pastor, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 13, 2011.

³⁰⁶ *The Book of Discipline*, A.M.E. Zion Publishing House (2008), 12.

summed up as follows: “We are a congregation that believes in the gospel of liberation that results in all people being valued and enabled to reach their God.”³⁰⁷ What we believe in and stand for is a means of empowerment. The primary scripture that supports our action as a church is Luke 4:18.

Reflection upon Spirituality

The physical objects that best symbolize the ministry, mission, and spirituality are as follows. First and foremost, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church itself (the egg) is the first symbol one sees. When members come to experience God in their daily lives at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, their spirituality can be metaphorically compared to that of “a seed” that is being intentionally planted by God. Some individuals, more than others, can be described as *souls* that establish divine roots and who instinctively and persistently grow.

The growth of the seed/soul begins from the time one visits the church and is met by our STAND Ministry, which regulates the parking and traffic in between services to create a sincere ambiance of welcome for our guests who are potential seeds. Progressively, seeds/souls are then greeted by our “Hospitality Ministry,” which serves faithfully every Sunday whether there is a multitudinous down pouring of rain, innumerable amounts of snowflakes, or unbearable rays of the sun. Frankly, when individuals enter a building or organization there are three things that they see: “artifacts”³⁰⁸ (physical landscaping), “espoused values”³⁰⁹ (timeless guiding principles),

³⁰⁷ Interview with Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore, Pastor, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 13, 2011.

³⁰⁸ Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall, N.Y.T.S. Leadership Class, Class Notes, May 26, 2011.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

and “basic underlying assumptions” (the history of a value system that is rooted deep in the tradition of the church).³¹⁰ The ministries mentioned above are symbolic in representing our church. In a more perceptible way, upon entering Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, individuals view “the cross,” which symbolizes where Jesus died for salvation, the “centered pulpit” indicating that preaching is central to worship, “two candles” one for Jesus’ humanity and the other for His divinity; when they are lit, the church is in worship, and the “stained glass windows” where Jesus is portrayed behind the pulpit pictorially as “a Man of color,” One who is historically recorded as being from Nazareth (Matt. 13:54). All these symbols introduce a stranger once inside to the type of congregation we are. Additionally, our church is identified by our dynamic aforementioned Music Ministry as well as the several housing structures that have been obtained near the church for meeting spaces and administrative purposes.

Moving on, souls/seeds are seated by our faithful ushers; this seating is a vital process of God’s transformational work. The symbolic soil of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is truly rich and is fully nourished by the Holy Spirit. Once God decides that a seed/soul should be planted in our congregation, the Barnabas Ministry (responsible for ministering to new converts) begins the process of spiritual instruction and then gives significant inspiration by way of encouragement. It is rather difficult for a new seed not to be drawn in since God is doing the drawing. Purposely, God uses the entire worship experience from the preached word of the pastor, ministerial staff, choir, etc., to begin the growing process.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

Reflection upon Programs

Insightfully, the program that best represents the ministry of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is the G.L.A.D classes. To expound upon this ministry in more depth, it is a dynamic Sunday school lesson that is distributed to all the members of the church and offered just about every day of the week. The program is intentionally designed to be for small groups, having principals of worship, discipleship, evangelism, service, stewardship, and fellowship built into the class.

Interestingly, the program that demonstrates the weaker side of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church at this time is the class leader system, which lost out to G.L.A.D. classes and the aforementioned Prayer Ministry.

Reflection upon History

By way of longer history and heritage (including historical ascent) of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church the following must be noted.

According to the information that has been passed down through the years, in 1896 a small group of people met in the home of Mrs. Anna Green, who lived on the corner of Eleventh Avenue and Eastchester Lane, for the purposes of organizing a Colored Methodist Church in Mt. Vernon, New York, thus marking the founding of the first A.M. E. Zion Church in [Mt. Vernon]...The first meeting place as a church was in a frame building on the corner of South Ninth Avenue and West Third Street.³¹¹

Regarding the persons of past godly guidance, the following pastors have been responsible for the leadership of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church over the years – The Rev. W. H. Ely was the first pastor in 1896.³¹² Subsequently, in order the pastors were The Rev. C.H. Williams (1899-1900), The Rev. George Frances Green (1999-

³¹¹ Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church 100th Anniversary (1896-1996), 10.

³¹² Ibid., 10.

1901), The Rev. Emory Thomas (1901-1903) (“During this time the church was moved from Ninth Avenue to larger quarters on Third Street...”),³¹³ The Rev. R.A. Lyle (1903-1907) (“Under his leadership membership grew to the extent that they wanted to build larger and better quarters; this they did by purchasing the property at 253 So. Eighth Avenue, and there a new building was erected.”)³¹⁴ The Rev. N.E. Ray (1907-1908), The Rev. N.E. Collins (1908-1912), “The Rev. Johnson was the next pastor (1912-1913), at which time the church was given the name Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church.”³¹⁵ In succession after him the names of those who held pastorates were The Rev. Samuel S. Boyd (1913-1924), The Rev. F.W. Riley (1924-1926), The Rev. James R. White (1929-1933), The Rev. J.H. Tucker (1933-1934), The Rev. Blunt (1934-1935), The Rev. Polk K. Fonvielle (1935-1946), The Rev. Clinton Wilcox Sr. (1946-1967), and The Rev. Belvie H. Jackson (1968-1993).

In 1993, “an historic event occurred at the New York Annual Conference, as The Reverend W. Darin Moore, one of Rev. Jackson’s sons in the ministry was transferred from Jones Tabernacle A.M.E. Zion Church, Indianapolis, IN. He was appointed by Bishop Walker to return to Mt. Vernon and pastor his home church.”³¹⁶ Pastor Moore has served in this position uninterrupted since this time, and was just recently appointed back to the church as pastor by Bishop George E. Battle on Sunday, June 26, 2011.

Pastors and ministers are appointed to serve for only one year at a time. Pastor Moore is

³¹³ Ibid., 10.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 10.

³¹⁵ Ibid., 10.

³¹⁶ Ibid., 12.

offering himself for the position of bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church at the General Conference in June 2012.

Reflection upon Tradition

Informatively,

The first church organized in 1796 and built in 1800 was called Zion. The founders chose this name because, ‘it was the name most frequently used in the Bible to designate the church of God.’...Among the leaders of the movement was James Varick, who was the first Bishop and to whom is attributed the founding father of the Zion Church. Zion Church was incorporated in 1801 by the name ‘The African Methodist Episcopal Church in New York.’ Methodist Episcopal was always in the title to exhibit the retention of the doctrine and form of church government under which the denomination was originated. “African” was prefixed to the rest of the title of this church because it was to be controlled by the descendants of Africa, in the interest of humanity, regardless of race, color, sex, or condition...Because another denomination came into existence with the same title, and so much confusion was brought about, the general conference in 1848 voted to make Zion a part of a denominational name, henceforth, to be known as the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. From the very outset, the Zion Church has been in the forefront in the battle for full citizenship and freedom in this country. The A.M.E. Zion Church encompasses all of the United States, Canada, Caribbean Islands, England, Africa, India and South America,³¹⁷ and it is under the supervision of twelve (12) elected bishops.

In closing, the historicity and cultural heritage of Zion is richer and much more extensive in many ways. However, the above gives quite an adequate picture for you, the reader.

³¹⁷ *Greater Centennial New Members Guide*, Abbreviated History of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (September 2008), 8.

CHAPTER 2

THE CATERPILLAR: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGE

As an Associate Minister of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, N.Y. and a thirty-five-year substance abuse survivor, the following statistics alarm me. Out of 68,000³¹⁸ residents in Mt. Vernon, less than 2% have sought professional treatment for addictions.³¹⁹ Less than 1% of those in treatment seek it from a church program. Of the city's five largest churches, there is only one Recovery Ministry providing holistic treatment. If this problem is not addressed, those with past and present addictions will never look to the Church as viable means of recovery. This Demonstration Project will design a transformational Recovery Ministry at Greater Centennial with the intent to duplicate the design in other churches.

EXPLORATION OF THE CHALLENGE

“Now it came to pass, afterward, that [Jesus] went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons...and many others provided for Him from their substance.” (Luke 8:3 NKJV).

The main reason that the subject of addiction is significant to me is because it is a very personal issue by way of experience. God spared my life after using drugs and alcohol sequentially for 35 years with few breaks. The drugs I abused are alcohol, nicotine, marijuana, THC, heroin, crack, and methadone. For 13 years, God has

³¹⁸U.S. Census Bureau, State & County QuickFax, (Mt. Vernon, New York), <http://quickfax.census.gov> (Accessed October 19, 2011).

³¹⁹ Gary Dollard, Admissions to NYS OASAS CD Treatment Programs, Mt. Vernon Residents Admissions, CY 2010.

disrupted and delivered me from the dysfunctional pattern and lifestyle that I lived. The story is quite compelling of how my worldly life of suffering ended. On January 14, 1999, I was blessed to go into my last seven-day detox (and afterwards a 28-day rehab). Prior to that, I used drugs to live, and lived to use drugs. Informatively, I was also disconnected spiritually from God, academically challenged, occasionally homeless, incarcerated twice, and emotionally bankrupt. I also had several other challenges that were associated with addiction. Unexpectedly to me (but not to God), while in rehab, I had a spiritual awakening. A female facilitator told those of us who were in the program that due to the recidivism rate of substance abusers and relapse only two of us would make it in successful recovery. Astonishingly, I heard the voice of God telling me that I would be one of the two. After that day, I felt a change come over my spirit. I began going to the church services at the rehab, which was at New York Hospital, along with the in-house meetings. After completing the rehab and coming home, I was (re) introduced to Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church (the church where my great-grandparents and grandmother attended in previous years). I was still, however, on 130 mg. of methadone. I followed the suggestions of the rehab when I left, by attending an outpatient facility, which stressed the importance of Twelve Step meetings. Being new in recovery and only knowing how to use drugs successfully, I took this advice. In February of 1999 (God's appointed time), I gave my life to Christ at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. This is the most significant thing that I have ever done in my life thus far. I joined the church in March of 1999 after taking new members' classes. Subsequent to my conversion, I found that my recovery from substance abuse was *really* growing and developing more from my relationship with Jesus, along with the spiritual

aspect of the Recovery Ministry's approach, by being able to call on the name of the Lord. This is not to take anything away from the Twelve Step fellowship programs, which I have also found to be quite effective in my life.

Experientially, my transformation took place through my relationship with Jesus Christ, which has primarily been nurtured through several aspects of the church. Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church is a church dedicated to the transformation of individuals and communities. I am the embodiment of the church's transformational goal. Fortunately, I am a member of the recovering community who has felt Greater Centennial's intentional concern for people in the recovery process. Sadly, Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church is the only church located in Mt. Vernon that has a Recovery Ministry.

Moreover, "From my social location of being ordained clergy in the church and a leader in the community of Mt. Vernon I fully recognize that drug and alcohol addiction remains being a significant problem that plagues our communities."³²⁰ With this in mind, on March 31, 2011, I went to four of the largest churches in Mt. Vernon (all a part of the United Black Clergy) to find out by qualitative research (interviews) if these churches had Recovery Ministries; I also spoke with the pastor of a fifth church in April. The results are as follows. According to Deaconess Shirley Maurice³²¹ (Missions & Evangelism) Unity Baptist Church, located at 101 South 2nd Avenue, has no Recovery Ministry at this time. The church never attempted to start a ministry of this type as far as she knew. She believes that the holistic approach could help. She says their church has

³²⁰ Angela Ryan Leadership Paper.

³²¹ Interview with Sis. Shirley Maurice, Deaconess, Unity Baptist Church, March 31, 2011.

no way currently to identify those people who are struggling with addictions. She is not sure how to go about designing a recovery program. Deaconess Maurice states that “individuals in this population need to know that the church is here for them spiritually, physically if possible (not to be manipulative) towards them but to listen to them.” As a representative of the church, she would be interested in learning more about a recovery program as part of the future plans of the church. This meeting ended in a word of prayer. Those in attendance encouraged the project. Their church was the initial place that my actual research began.

Rev. William H. Mizell³²² (The Associate Pastor for Congregational Care) states that Grace Baptist Church, located at 52 South Sixth Avenue, has “no Recovery Ministry.”³²³ The church has never attempted to start one to his knowledge. Presently, people with substance abuse issues are referred to qualified individuals in the field of addiction who are members of the church. After briefly dialoging with Rev. Mizell, he agreed that “there is a need”³²⁴ for a holistic ministry of this type, saying “it’s something to think about.”³²⁵ Rev. Mizell wants me to keep him updated. He closed our visit out with a powerful prayer stating that I had Grace Baptist Church’s full support in my Doctoral endeavor.

Bro. Henry Woodruff stated that Macedonia Baptist Church, 141 Rev. H. Dixon Boulevard, has no Recovery Ministry at this time. The church to his remembrance never

³²²Interview with Rev. William H. Mizell, Associate Pastor, Congregational Care, Grace Baptist Church, March 31, 2011.

³²³Ibid.

³²⁴Ibid.

³²⁵Ibid.

attempted to start one. He stated “a recovery program would be helpful.”³²⁶ Rev. Peter Wilson³²⁷ (the pastor) of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, located at 411 South Eight Avenue, also stated that his church has no Recovery Ministry at this time.

THE DISCUSSION OF “URGENCY”

Inclusively, the sense of urgency I have concerning the lack of recovery programs in churches is, first and foremost, that God that has given us a mandate to address this problem. Jesus speaks clearly in the gospel of Matthew concerning “the least of these.” Some interpret this familiar term as being the nation of Israel, others to needy people in general.³²⁸ Either way, Jesus discusses two operative choices, saying, “For when I was hungry you gave Me food. I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink.” (Matt. 25:35). Contrastingly, Jesus says, “For when I was hungry you gave Me no food. I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink.” (Matt. 25:42 NKJV). Certainly, we know enough about Jesus (a parable speaker) to know that this is not just a literal understanding of food (as in perishable goods). I am constrained to believe this includes spiritual food as well. If, in fact, the Church continues to (specifically) ignore the intentional holistic upheaval of those in the process of recovery, I am confident that those struggling with the disease of addiction will no longer look to the Church as viable means for help. Clearly, individuals within this population need to feel “the lifeline” of Jesus Christ being thrown out intentionally to rescue them.

³²⁶ Interview with Bro. Henry Woodruff, Church Administrator, Macedonia Baptist Church, March 31, 2011.

³²⁷ Interview with Rev. Peter Wilson, Pastor, Mt. Zion Church, April 11, 2011.

³²⁸ New King James Version, “The Least of these my brethren,” Matthew 25:40 (study notes).

What I have found to be at stake for me biblically and even theologically are the following thoughts and beliefs. I have made a paramount theological decision in keeping with God's word (as both a servant of God and an individual in the recovery process) to be "recycled." Jesus tells Peter, "I have prayed especially for you...that your [own] faith may not fail; and when you yourself have turned..., strengthen and establish your brethren [sisteren]." (Luke 22:32 NKJV). I am living this scripture out in my ministry. As I have grown in my relationship with God and in my understanding of the process of recovery (over these last 13 years), it can be said forthrightly that my intention and contention is to be a positive example for those struggling with the disease of addiction (as well as those in recovery) at whatever stage or phase they are in.

Moreover, I am even more theologically challenged and inspired about specifically doing this type of ministry when I look within the biblical text and see how "overcomers" are given great responsibilities (Rev. 2:26 NKJV) and guaranteed great rewards (Rev. 2:26 NKJV) from God. I am clear that as an overcomer, I must continue giving back what was so freely given to me by God. Ever since my life changed (and I was delivered), God has given me an extreme amount of passion and commitment, allowing me to become a dedicated servant in this field. For your review, I served as the leader of A Greater Way of Life Recovery Ministry for seven years. I studied academically (receiving educational hours) and presently hold my CASAC-T (Credentials Alcohol Substance Abuse Counseling-Training) certificate. In addition, I completed several hours towards my internship within the specialized addiction field at the Mount Vernon Methadone Clinic (a clinic where I used to be a client). Moreover, I recently completed working a part-time position with the Salvation Army, counseling a

caseload of up to 15 undomiciled men who struggled with the disease of addiction.

While there, I taught an array of recovery classes from the biblical text. Parenthetically, individuals with backgrounds in addiction/recovery and their interest (or lack thereof) of developing (or not developing) “a relationship with God” (not just being involved in religion) is an essential subject of interest to me.

Recently, I was “asked by a director of one of the Drug Treatment facilities in Mt. Vernon to come and bring a *spiritual dynamic* to their program. I am grateful to be a volunteer at this center because in past years I was a client of this very same program. Now, I have the privilege to give individuals in this population the message of liberation through spirituality. It is also a great opportunity to bridge new relationships between clergy and secular treatment programs in the community.”³²⁹ Currently, as part of this Doctoral project, I am conducting a pilot study at this facility (Archway Clinic, a division of St. John’s Riverside Hospital) that will bring forth critical data showing the spiritual growth and development of persons in the recovery process. The verbal feedback derived from the director and given to me after nine weeks of my teaching at the program was that 80% like the spirituality group, while 20% have concerns.³³⁰ I have a high amount of respect for this particular facility, in that it is the only facility (to my knowledge) that welcomes God. Most of the other programs approaches are different. Sadly, in the city of Mt. Vernon, a man who attended the Mount Vernon methadone clinic and who had a multiplicity of emotional and health challenges waited for the train to come one day, sat on the tracks and intentionally took his life. I often think had the man had a relationship

³²⁹ Angela Ryan, First Quarterly Conference Report, Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church, September 7, 2011.

³³⁰ Telephone conversation, Elaine Bryant, LMSW, CASAC Director, September 13, 2011.

with God (or spirituality offered to him), he might still be alive today. Individuals in the process of recovery go through a plethora of challenging issues and face many temptations of “picking up.” A relationship with God (regardless of how one wants to identify God) is essential in the recovering person’s life, since it is God who has helped them in large part to put the drugs down. I am committed in every way to encouraging these women and men who attend the facility, and have also encouraged them strongly to consider pursuing education as a further means of liberation.

As way of encouragement and testimony, I share with them how God allowed me to go back to school after taking a leave of absence for 27 years. I tell of how I then went back to school and graduated valedictorian with my Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology and then got a full scholarship to one of the top colleges in the world to work on my Masters of Divinity degree and how God has now blessed me to be able to work on my doctorate. I assure them that if God did something so amazing in my life (as messed up as I was), He can do the same for them.

As stated prior, for most people moving from addiction to recovery (and even in recovery itself) like transformation –“process” is important. What is vital for those inside the church community and even outside of it to understand is that everybody’s “process” is his/her process. “Succinctly, the thrust of my ministry is to encourage and convey to those in recovery or presently addicted (by way of inspiration not condemnation) that if God did it for me, God can do it for them.”³³¹ “What we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created anew. The old life is gone; a new life burgeons!”

³³¹ Angela Ryan, N.Y.T.S. Leadership Essay, June 2011.

What is at stake for me (and the integrity of this project) on a social basis is the quality of life of the community. In other words, I want to see Mt. Vernon become a better community – a community whose residents are less dependent on illicit drugs and alcohol and more dependent upon God and the places of worship within the community. Mt. Vernon is the community where I grew up since the age of two. It is the community where I attended public schools, the community where God chose to perform God’s miracle in my life. I want God to use me further in being a blessing to this community.

What is at stake for me politically in my doing a project such as this is my persistent hope of seeing “laws that funnel resources toward ‘restoration’ being passed.”³³² In addition, I would like to see “the redistribution of resources that are presently allocated for punitive and incarceration issues being redirected and/or allocated to recovery and transformation initiatives in the urban community.”³³³

What is at stake for me psychologically is God is using me to help bring people to a place of liberation through education (a key component of this project). The apostle Paul says so eloquently, “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Rom.12:2 NKJV). My belief is that there is a place where the mind and the spirit meet, and in this place—there is liberty.

What is at stake for me economically is the opportunity for me to prepare to a significant degree job-ready candidates (with sound spirituality, self-esteem, schooling, and social skills), who are willing to be a viable part of our community. I also see God using this project as an essential channel of my faith, where once I have completed God’s

³³² Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 13, 2011.

³³³ Ibid.

will (this Doctorate), God will give me increase, assuring my economic stability for the rest of my life. This will equate to economic empowerment, an area that I have failed to grow in since ceasing from substance abuse and coming to Christ. When I achieve it, I have promised to continue giving my services and treasures back to others (never, ever forgetting what has been freely given to me along life's way to help me attain God's promises).

What is at stake for me spiritually is not just my fulfilling the mandate that Jesus left for the "least of these," but also my assignment is further clarified as I respond in a like manner of Peter, who Jesus tells "Feed My Sheep." (John 21:17 NKJV). I must be obedient to the directive/assignment from Jesus when I am given it. In many ways, I am feeding the sheep (besides ministry) throughout my work on this dissertation.

The problem of having no Recovery Ministries in churches in our community indeed requires systematic change. In a systematic way, "true solutions come from God; the Church acts as the conduit (with power) being able to translate many of life's answers to God's people."³³⁴ My expected outcome of the project is that all of the large (medium size) churches will incorporate some type of Recovery Ministry within their ministry's structure. Also, on my agenda is specifically to bridge new relationships between churches (clergy in particular) and secular treatment programs that will benefit persons in the addiction/recovery population. This will make a huge difference than what is currently the norm. This has already been addressed in my pilot study work in the

³³⁴ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 16, 2011.

community of Mt. Vernon at Archway. A considerable amount of clients have mentioned their gratitude in having a representative of God at the facility once a week.

At this time, there are adequate resources to address this challenge. The Site Team brings a wealth of resources by way of gifts, talents, and expertise. We have on the team Bro. David Bradley (Business Manager of Greater Centennial A. M.E. Zion Church); he is the point man who is phenomenal with numbers, statistics, gathering research, etc. Joan Shedlovsky enjoys a career as an Administrative Assistant and brings to the team gifts of administration (organizational skills including the transcribing of "minutes" from all of our meetings). Darin Kent (DK) is a gifted and dynamic videographer at Greater Centennial A. M. E. Zion Church. He is also the president and CEO of his own business called *Jesus Piece Productions*. Bro. Darin is fortunate to be fluent in today's new cultural language of technology and social media. He will help to bring my vision (the demonstration project/dissertation) to reality for all to see via technology. Deja Jowanna Angela Jenkins is my goddaughter. She is 17 years old, in her last year of high school, and is also an honor roll student. She is actively looking at colleges to attend and has recently been accepted to Judge Judy's mentoring program. Deja will be representing the perspectives of the youth (who are the future generation) in this project. I raised her for the first four years of her life, even though I was caught in the grips of addiction. She has witnessed firsthand God's transformative power in my life. Dr. Howard Fogel (Ph. D. CASAC) is an Educational Director at the Center for Addiction Studies and Research. He brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise from the New York State OASAS (Offices Alcohol, Substance Abuse Services). Dr. Fogel was one of my former professors while I did my undergraduate work in psychology. He

has stated candidly his willingness to help me in this project, in any way that he can. The Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore is on my team, he is my pastor, my father in ministry, and the man of God – that God chose to use to help liberate and transform my life. He is the spiritual overseer of the project. Without a doubt, our team is a divinely strong team that has been put together by God before the foundation of the world for God's purpose. By faith, of which it is impossible to please God without (Heb. 11:6), I feel confident that God will provide any additional tangible resources that are needed to get God's project done. The apostle Paul wrote, "My God shall supply all [our] needs according to His riches in glory." (Phil. 4:19 NKJV)."

Churches make a great investment when they continue to be "viable answers to hurting people."³³⁵ If the church does not make this intentional investment (offering a holistic/educational curriculum), it will potentially lose a population that it could strategically save. I think that the target group (churches) will respond favorably because it is a chance for them to provide a greater opportunity to bring more individuals to Christ, thereby transforming lives. Clearly, there is sufficient interest for this type of project, in the sense of payoff (i.e., a sense of personal satisfaction) for those in the target group (churches) and their responding to the challenge. The payoff will be "transformation" of individual's lives. The only way to assure that such personal satisfaction will be generated is for the church to trust God and make the investment in the journey. Logically, since process is involved, it is not a short-term investment that will have immediate results. On the other hand, the process will be long term, gradual, and gratifying. Unmistakably, I am a living witness and testimony of the transformative

³³⁵ Interview with David Bradley, Business Manager, Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, May 13, 2011.

power of God. I once lived life behaving like a caterpillar, I have gone through several metaphorical stages of the pupa and chrysalis and, by working on my doctorate, I have emerged into a butterfly and I have begun to fly. Considering this, the long-term investment that was made by Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church in my life over the years was well worth it. As a church, they trusted God and have received the payoff with my life being totally transformed – To God be the glory. Now, I am giving back by helping to transform other lives.

There are not any potential conflicts of interests that exist among any of the Site Team members and none that I am aware of that the target group has. We as a team are remaining prayerful about any conflicts of interests that may end up causing problems later on for this Demonstration Project. I extend an enormous amount of thanks to Bro. David Bradley and Joan Shedlovsky for their assistance and contributions to this section of the project.

CHAPTER 3
THE PUPA/CHRYsalis: STAGE OF CONVERSION
PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

Goals and Strategies:

Goal 1: To raise significant awareness at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church about the impact that an innovative Recovery Ministry will have in our community.

Strategy 1: Awareness video, along with the development of an original song about transformation, will be designed by Rev. Angela Ryan, Darin Kent and Melissina Reeburgh (Director of Music Ministry, Greater Centennial). Footage will be gathered in January and February; video production will take place in late February; and ministries viewing will occur in March.

Strategy 2: In January and February, Deja Jenkins, working with Site Team members, will develop a survey to ascertain the attitudes of her peers regarding addiction and drug use. Deja and an adult designee will administer the survey at her high school in Mt. Vernon. The Site Team will then analyze the survey results. Deja will address members of the Greater Centennial congregation about the survey, its results and how attitudes of young people will be incorporated into Rev. Angela Ryan's 12-session Recovery Ministry program.

Strategy 3: In March, Dr. Howard Fogel and Rev. Angela Ryan will conduct a workshop about addiction and spirituality. Results from Deja Jenkins' quantitative research will be included in the workshop.

Strategy 4: Rev. Angela Ryan will lead public speaking engagements at Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church from January to June.

Evaluation of Goal 1: As measured by a pre/post questionnaire, a majority of participants (at least 75%) who view the Raising Awareness video will have a better understanding of the need for an innovative holistic recovery program. A majority of workshop attendees (at least 75%) will also have a greater comprehension of the recovery issue as measured by a pre/post questionnaire. A post survey (only) of two of Rev. Ryan's speaking engagements will measure the success rate of her teachings/preachings (50% or higher will be the measurement tool of learning).

Goal 2: Establish a design/promotional team to create the transformational model that will train other churches; Rev. Angela Ryan and Bro. David Bradley will select members of this team.

Strategy 1: Criteria for the design/promotional team will be decided in January and February.

Strategy 2: In March, selection and training of the team will begin, and promotional assignments will be given to team members. Giving of testimonies and distribution of flyers will also take place in March.

Evaluation of Goal 2: Rev Ryan will identify 5 criteria for participants to become members of the design/promotional team. These criteria will be approved by the Site Team. Rev. Ryan will have at least 3 people who fit the criteria and select them as members of the team.

Goal 3: Rev. Angela Ryan will develop and publicize a 12-session Recovery Ministry program about the importance of education and spirituality. The program is intended to illicit empowerment, teach discipleship, and to provide an atmosphere of mentoring, which will be done by Rev. Ryan.

Strategy 1: From January to March, Rev. Angela Ryan will write the syllabus for the 12-session program. In March, recruit participants for the program, which runs from April to July. Participants will be assigned specific tasks and responsibilities. These will include accountability of attending classes and the option to be in various aspects of the Demonstration Project (i.e., public speaking, giving testimonies, passing out literature, qualitative research, and being a part of the final dissertation video).

Strategy 2: In June and July, the Social Networking Team (Deja Jenkins and Darin Kent) will use social networking tools (e.g., Facebook, Greater Centennial's website, YouTube, and Twitter) to publicize and engage the community in the new type of Recovery Ministry that Rev. Angela Ryan and her team are implementing.

Evaluation of Goal 3: Rev. Ryan will present to the Site Team a written outline for each of the 12 classes. The Site Team will review, verify, and

approve the course outline. Darin Kent will upload material publicizing the 12-session program to 3 social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Greater Centennial's website, and YouTube).

Goal 4: Rev. Angela Ryan, with the assistance of a curriculum writer, will create an inspirational handbook – one that will serve as model for training churches to work effectively with the recovery community.

Strategy 1: Throughout July and August, Rev. Angela Ryan and the Site Team will prepare and organize the handbook/church model for Recovery Ministries.

Strategy 2: The handbook will be published in August.

Evaluation of Goal 4: Distribute the handbook to 90% of the 7 largest churches in Mt. Vernon.

CHAPTER 4 **ADULT BUTTERFLY: RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Biblical Research and Analysis

What are the “transformational” implications in Pauline literature specific to the Book of Romans? How do they compare to what is said about transformation from the gospel of Matthew’s perspective?³³⁶

Research and Analysis into Practical Methodology

In what ways are existing treatment facilities meeting the diverse needs of substance abusers? What is the demographic profile of those seeking treatment?

Analysis of Spiritual Life and Practice

What are churches in New York doing to assist those with alcohol and drug problems and how can they move to provide a more holistic approach, teaching this population to have lives that include spirituality and education?

³³⁶ Keith A. Russell, *In Search of the Church* (New York: The Alban Institute, 1994), 23-36.

CHAPTER 5 **EVALUATION PROCESS**

In order to determine the success of my demonstration project, which focuses on the role churches have in the lives of people with past and present addictions, the following evaluation methods will be used:

Method of evaluation 1

In order to understand how the youth feel about drugs/alcohol and the Church, our team will be providing a questionnaire in one of the city's schools that will create the kind of information needed in making an assessment on how best to appeal to and serve this population.

Method of evaluation 2

Interviews with adults in the recovering population, inclusive of churches and other treatment programs, to ascertain how these individuals view the Church in regards to providing them holistic treatment. More in depth will be my finding out from this population by qualitative methodology, a type of study designed to investigate an issue with great depth³³⁷ through the interview process, what can be done by the Church to draw them closer. I am interested in learning if there can be a positive reaction within the community to combining spirituality and education as being a part of treatment, or as a recovery option.

³³⁷ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research A Multi-Methods Approach for Doctors of Ministry Theses*, (Oregon: WIPF and Stock, 2001), 82.

Method of evaluation 3

In order to evaluate participants' better understanding of addiction issues as they relate to holistic treatment, I will conduct a workshop on the realities of substance abuse/dependence with a professional addiction counselor and also give sermon series and/or Bible studies to discuss the spiritual dimensions of recovery. The feedback from these sessions, by way of questionnaire, will gage the community's interest in this optional type of spiritual treatment program.

After these four goals are implemented synonymous to nature's butterfly – the adult emerges (I continue to grow) providing spirituality and education to others, pollinating souls as a witness for Christ, and pursuing God's destiny for my life.

CHAPTER 6 **MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES**

The Process

My Site Team members devoted their time and resources to assess my ministerial competencies. The Site Team members who developed these competencies were David Bradley (Cortlandt Manor, N.Y.), Professor Howard Fogel (New Rochelle, N.Y.), Deja Jenkins (Mt. Vernon, N.Y.), Darin Kent (Mt. Vernon, N.Y.), and Joan Shedlovsky (Yonkers, N.Y.).

At the June 1, 2011, meeting (the first meeting that Professor Fogel attended), I advised the Site Team members of the assessment process.

On June 16, 2011, as per my discussion with Dr. Lundy, I informed Joan Shedlovsky that she and the other Site Team members could gather the competency information via e-mail (since our next scheduled meeting was to take place after the June 30 deadline).

Joan Shedlovsky, who is responsible for all administrative tasks on the team, has collected and summarized my ministerial competencies from the team members. The following is their report.

The Assessments

As Theologian – Reverend Angela Ryan has extensive knowledge of scripture and church doctrine. She has personal, lasting relationships with members of Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church. Rev. Ryan has spent the last several years in the formal

systematic study of Christian theology, receiving an advanced degree from Drew University. She has completed the six-year formal study requirements of her church. Rev. Ryan is gifted in her ability to decipher different parts of scripture in order to bring out the truths that are found deep within. This type of exegesis only comes with prayer and meditation that is devoted to having God reveal what He wants His people to know through her. She is also able to synthesize different parts and aspects of the Bible (for example, relating passages that were prophesized in the Old Testament that came to fruition in the New Testament). She uses her in-depth comprehension of The Word to assist members of her congregation as well as the larger community of Mt. Vernon with day-to-day struggles, especially in the area of substance abuse. She has a particular concern for those members of society who are considered “broken.” She seeks wisdom from God and from The Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore, her pastor. According to her goddaughter, Deja, Rev. Ryan is a virtuous and strong woman who depends on God.

Candidate will use a theological foundation to assist those with substance-abuse problems in a more holistic way.

As Preacher – Rev. Ryan is inspired by the message of scripture. Her gift of preaching is unlike most as she diligently prepares to be behind the sacred desk and she brings a much-needed word to the “sheep.” Her sermons are well organized, filled with biblical content, and she uses her own life experiences to motivate others. By using her testimony, she is always well received due to authenticity of her sermons. Rev. Ryan addresses the problems of the congregation and offers hope and concrete examples of how lives can be changed. Her delivery is passionate and authentic and her use of alliterations provides listeners with an excellent memory aide. She wants to give a voice

to those who are voiceless. Her destiny is to be a preacher. *Candidate wants to continue to use her life story as the basis for her preaching style.*

As Worship Leader – Rev. Ryan involves the congregation in all aspects of her sermons and leads a G.L.A.D. class that inspires her students. She also visits the sick, shut-ins, and those in prison to offer them the chance to worship. Her ultimate message is always positive and speaks about overcoming obstacles by having a relationship with God. Rev. Ryan has the unique ability to lead herself into a spirit of worship that is infectious to the people around her. Jesus Christ intimated that people who perceive to be forgiven more are more appreciative of that forgiveness. That great appreciation is crystal clear when Rev. Ryan leads worship. She is always ready to provide a level of worship in her immediate surroundings that warrants you to react on a heightened element of praise. She will bring you in with her when she begins praising and worshipping God. There is an atmosphere of joy when Rev. Ryan leads others in worship. She is recognized as a leader in the church and within the community.

Candidate wants to use real-life examples in the worship experience and will lead others to a fulfilling life through worship and education.

As Change Agent – Rev. Ryan’s life experience is a testament to transformation; she has changed as a person through her walk with Jesus Christ. By telling her story and having great faith, she involves others in the change process and encourages participation in transformation process. She has done this through her church and community involvement (Mt. Vernon Methadone Clinic, Prison Ministry, Salvation Army and her most recent work at Archway Clinic). Once Jesus Christ healed the people, He told them “go and tell no one,” but they went and told everyone. This is similar to Rev. Ryan’s

testimony, as she had gone and told everyone about her substance-abuse days, her lesbianism times, and her years before falling in love with Jesus Christ. These stories leave the common person to say, “This can’t be the same woman.” Rev. Ryan is dedicating her life’s work to the transformative power of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the community of those affected by substance abuse. She enthusiastically provides leadership to the Recovery Ministry program of her member church. She understands the message of God’s Word and its significance for social change. *Candidate wants to pursue areas where education and religion work together to change substance abusers lives.*

As Ecumenist – Rev. Ryan is interested in persons of all faiths. She encourages people from different faiths and different walks of life. She has relatives who practice Islam and has friends of different religions. She has always been known as a “people person” because she embraces all those she meets. Rev. Ryan has great respect for all faiths and has studied different religions in her undergraduate and graduate work. However, her faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God is unwavering and she wishes to persuade as many as she can to her heartfelt point of view. *Candidate will continue to increase her knowledge and appreciation of different faiths and is interested how different faiths approach society’s drug and alcohol problems.*

As Leader – Due to her religious convictions and theological education, Rev. Ryan motivates others and leads by example (turning her life around to become an Associate Minister in her church, where she works with the congregation and the larger community, especially those who are considered “at the fringes” of society). She has a biblical view of leadership. Rev. Ryan continues to tell all she meets “be encouraged”

and she encourages others to have a relationship with God so that their lives can be fulfilled. Rev. Ryan has taken leadership in Greater Centennial's Prayer, Prison and Recovery Ministries as well as having taken part in evangelism. She can speak to the folk on Wall Street as well as those on Third Street (a well-known drug area in the urban community of Mt. Vernon), which gives her the divine gift to persuade people from various backgrounds to move in the right direction on behalf of Jesus Christ. Her leadership style is authoritarian in nature with a firm belief that those in charge were placed there by God and they deserve the respect and stature of the leadership position. As a leader, she continually consults God for direction and when the direction is clear, she is tireless in her execution. Rev. Ryan is well organized and determined. She has a plan for her future. *Candidate wants to develop her leadership skills so she can assist others with their journeys.*

Religious Educator – Rev. Ryan has studied the Bible and other religious texts in church and in school. The main tenet of her doctoral work is the synchronicity of education and spirituality and its power to transform lives. She has taught at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church on numerous occasions, including what may be her most favorite – G.L.A.D. classes. Her teaching style is practical and biblical – it's Jesus. She has also taught a class on Prayer that was well received. Her work in the Recovery Ministry was primarily that of a religious instructor. Rev. Ryan is most comfortable in the preacher /teacher-student setting. *Candidate wants to extend her knowledge of religion to assist others and wants to continue her own religious education.*

As Counselor – Rev. Ryan has made a significant difference in the lives of others who have struggled with addition. She has done this through her church work,

community outreach, and when she worked at the Salvation Army. She believes in the power of spiritual healing and uses theology in her work with those with substance-abuse problems. Rev. Ryan demonstrates a non-judgmental, respectful acceptance of clients. She has genuine care, concern and respect for others as well as an appreciation of clients' unique differences. Rev. Ryan has a distinctive capacity for warmth, genuineness, and empathy. She strives to help those with afflictions and has made a huge impact on those she has counseled. She has told DK that social media is not her "thing" because she cannot touch the people, look into their eyes, and pray with them. Rev. Ryan knows this is an important part of ministry and recognizes that disconnect in those areas will lead to disaster if not balanced correctly. *Candidate wants to use her counseling skills in all community settings.*

As Pastor/Shepherd – Rev. Ryan is actively involved in welcoming newcomers to her church. While not the pastor of her church, Rev. Ryan always encourages others with a smile on her face and love in her heart. However, Greater Centennial is a unique church that gives each minister an opportunity to become her own pastor, in charge of her own flock and responsible for her own ministry. Rev. Ryan is aware of the responsibilities of becoming a pastor and has the skills and passion to become a great pastor. Her focus is on the teaching and counseling of those in need. The church operations (budgeting, building maintenance, fundraising, and staffing) are areas where she has little experience or passion to master them. Rev. Ryan's desire is to see a single broken heart mended and not to structure an operational plan on moving the masses. She leads in prayer, providing others with solace and strength. She also ministers to the sick

in hospitals, shut-ins at home, and those incarcerated in prison. *Candidate wants to continue pursuing a position of holiness/priesthood within the hierarchy of her church.*

As Spiritual Leader – Rev. Ryan values her spiritual journey and continues to involve others in that journey. She has the ability to think critically and biblically. She has comprehensive knowledge of her church and the Bible. She is able to apply that knowledge in real-life ministry. Her concern centers on providing spiritual nourishment to those afflicted with substance abuse. She believes that complete liberation from substance abuse is through spiritual renewal. The spiritual part of Rev. Ryan is bursting from the seams with her ministry. She can no longer hold a conversation without telling about the goodness of God. This comes from the time put in to searching scripture and having that dwell deep within her spirit. It is obvious she does this daily. Rev. Ryan trusts and leads people to God for the answers she received in her own life. *Candidate will continue to develop her knowledge of the Bible and how her church can assist others in overcoming obstacles.*

As Administrator – One part of Rev. Ryan’s ministry that she works diligently to improve is her administrative skills. She knows the task at hand, but struggles with organizing her thoughts so that they may work in her favor in order to achieve her goals. Rev. Ryan needs to continue to improve her administrative proficiency through honing her computer aptitude and organization skills. She experiences difficulty in articulating the algorithm necessary to work through multilayered programs and then allocating the resources required for completion. Rev. Ryan needs to establish goals and then pursue them. *Candidate will work on developing administrative skills.*

As Professional Skills – Rev. Ryan is bright, highly motivated and passionate about her work. She has a strong commitment to excellence and demonstrates a commitment to a process of lifelong learning and professional growth. She recognizes her personal and professional limitations and understands the importance and need for self-reflection in one's personal life and one's professional life. She is comfortable seeking guidance and support from others and has a willingness to incorporate feedback into her work. Rev. Ryan has dedicated much time and effort into developing her professional skills. She can explain what others are in need of and persuade others to help when needed. Rev. Ryan is devoted to her church and religion, enjoys working with others, and has a great passion to learn. She is a natural leader and has the ability to minister to others in various settings and environments. Rev. Ryan works in a professional manner, but could be more open to new ideas. *Candidate will work on managing workload in a timely manner.*

Competencies Chosen for Development

I. As RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR: To acquire a more comprehensive knowledge of religious literature and teaching techniques so that I can become a more effective instructor and assist others in their spiritual development.

Strategies:

- A. Create a ten-book bibliography of religious education books.
- B. Audit religious education course.

Evaluation:

- A. Complete a bibliography and have 100% it reviewed and verified by Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore.

B. Attend 75% of religious education classes; attendance will be verified by professor.

II. As ADMINISTRATOR: To strengthen my executive and leadership skills so that I will become more organized in my work and more strategic in my thinking.

Strategies:

A. Audit a leadership/administration course with Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall (prospective advisor).

B. Create a ten-book bibliography specific to administration.

Evaluation:

A. Attend 75% of administration classes; attendance will be verified by professor.

B. Complete a ten-book bibliography and have all 10 books verified by professor.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TIMELINE

Date	Task/Activity	Activities to Complete Tasks	Person Responsible
7/30/11	Site Team meeting	Discuss Bibliography development and appointment of quality control Site Team member responsible for adhering to Guidelines for Human Subject Research	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
8/30/11	First Bibliography listing draft (250)	Research	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
9/24/11	Site Team meeting	Review Demonstration Project Proposal	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
11/02/11	Site Team meeting	Discuss Demonstration Project Proposal revisions and conference call with Dr. Wanda Lundy	Site Team
12/12/11	Site Team meeting	Discuss next steps to begin implementation of Demonstration Project	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
12/22/11	Demonstration Project Proposal final draft submitted	Revisions to Challenge Statement, Plan of Implementation and Timeline	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
12/22/11	Demonstration Project Proposal approval	Submission of Demonstration Project Proposal	Dr. Wanda Lundy/Dr. Keith Russell
1/16/12	Begin footage gathering for awareness video	Site Team videographer will record relevant information	Jesus Piece Productions (Darin Kent)
1/16/12	Begin footage gathering for dissertation video	Site Team videographer will record relevant information	Jesus Piece Productions (Darin Kent)
1/16/12	Begin six months of speaking engagements at Greater Centennial	Rev. Angela Ryan will include raising awareness to the audiences about addiction and recovery	Rev. Angela Ryan
1/16/12	Development of Model – sessions 1-3 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for first three of 12-session Transformational Model	Rev. Angela Ryan
1/16/12	Original Song	Rev. Angela Ryan will meet with Melissina Reeburgh to discuss the development of the original song	Rev. Angela Ryan
1/17/12	Development of final draft of Youth Survey	Choose and refine the appropriate questions for survey	Deja Jenkins
1/17/12	Development of Model – sessions 4-6 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for next three sessions of Transformation Model	Rev. Angela Ryan
1/24/12	Site Team meeting	Review lesson plans for sessions 1-6 and Youth Survey questions	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
2/10/12	Youth Survey administered and collected	Team goes into high school to conduct survey	Deja Jenkins and Designee
2/15/12	Development of Model – sessions 7-9 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for next three sessions of Transformation Model	Rev. Angela Ryan

2/20/12	Awareness Video production	Video footage arranged to raise awareness	Rev. Angela Ryan and Darin Kent
2/29/12	Site Team meeting	Review lesson plans for sessions 7-9 and Awareness Video and develop pre-post Video Awareness questionnaire	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
3/7/12	Selection of Design/Promo Team	Based on criteria, establish a Design/Promotional Team	Rev. Angela Ryan
3/10/12	Promotional activity of Promo Team begins	Promo Team will promote the addiction and spirituality workshop and 12-session Transformational Model	Promo Team
3/15/12	Development of Model – sessions 10-12 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for last three sessions of Transformation Model	Rev. Angela Ryan
3/16/12	Showing of Awareness Video	Invite different ministries of Greater Centennial to view the Awareness Video with pre-post questionnaire and a discussion afterwards	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
3/30/12	Addiction and Spirituality Workshop	Seminar on the fundamentals of addiction and spirituality and its benefits to combat addiction. Workshop will include presentation of quantitative results of Youth Survey.	Rev. Angela Ryan Dr. Howard Fogel Deja Jenkins
3/30/12	Production of handbook for 12 session model	Compilation of lesson plans and supporting documents to facilitate class instruction	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team
4/1/12	The 12-session Transformational Model lessons begin	Site Team videographer will record relevant information	Jesus Piece Productions (Darin Kent)
5/7/12	Draft first-month project observations and evaluations of program	Design/Promo Team and Site Team gather to review progress	Rev. Angela Ryan Site Team Design/ Promo Team
6/7/12	Begin to develop social media outlet for interaction	Set up blogging type area for 24- hour communication and prayer	Deja Jenkins & Darin Kent
6/15/12	Draft second-month project observations and evaluations of program	Design/Promo Team and Site Team gather to review progress	Rev. Angela Ryan, Site Team and Design/Promo Team
7/7/12	Draft third-month project observations and evaluations of program	Design/Promo Team and Site Team gather to review progress	Rev. Angela Ryan, Site Team & Design/Promo Team
8/1/12	Begin preparing Church Guide/Model for Recovery	Based on the results of the 12-session program and the two workshops, Rev. Angela Ryan will draft Church Guide	Rev. Angela Ryan & Production Team
9/1/12	Begin development of dissertation video	Begin the editing and writing process for the video	Rev. Angela Ryan, Darin Kent & Promo/Design Team
9/1/12	Begin drafting dissertation	Four-month process to draft	Rev. Angela Ryan
9/15/12	Distribution of Church Guide/Model	Distribute handbook to churches in the community	Rev. Angela Ryan & Production Team
1/15/13	Submit first draft of dissertation & video to NYTS	Dissertation and accompanying video are submitted to NYTS	Rev. Angela Ryan
2/1/13	Approval of Demonstration Project draft	Submission of Demonstration Project to NYTS	Dr. Wanda Lundy
4/1/13	Oral presentation	Based on Demonstration Project results and research, give oral presentation	Rev. Angela Ryan
5/1/13	Graduation		Rev. Angela Ryan

APPENDIX B: BUDGET

Date	Task/Activity	Activities to Complete Tasks	Person Responsible	Budgetary Consideration/Costs	Source of Funding
7/30/11	Site Team meeting	Discuss Bibliography development and appointment of quality control Site Team member responsible for adhering to Guidelines for Human Subject Research	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
8/30/11	First Bibliography listing draft (250)	Research	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
9/24/11	Site Team meeting	Review Demonstration Project Proposal	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
11/02/11	Site Team meeting	Discuss Demonstration Project Proposal revisions and conference call with Dr. Wanda Lundy	Site Team		
12/12/11	Site Team meeting	Discuss next steps to begin implementation of Demonstration Project	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
12/22/11	Demonstration Project Proposal final draft submitted	Revisions to Challenge Statement, Plan of Implementation and Timeline	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
12/22/11	Demonstration Project Proposal approval	Submission of Demonstration Project Proposal	Dr. Wanda Lundy/ Dr. Keith Russell		
1/16/12	Begin footage gathering for awareness video	Site Team videographer will record relevant information	Jesus Piece Productions (Darin Kent)		
1/16/12	Begin footage gathering for dissertation video	Site Team videographer will record relevant information	Jesus Piece Productions (Darin Kent)		
1/16/12	Begin six months of speaking engagements at Greater Centennial	Rev. Angela Ryan will include raising awareness to the audiences about addiction and recovery	Rev. Angela Ryan		
1/16/12	Development of Model – sessions 1-3 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for first three of 12-session Transformational Model	Rev. Angela Ryan		

1/16/12	Original Song	Rev. Angela Ryan will meet with Melissina Reeburgh to discuss the development of the original song	Rev. Angela Ryan		
1/17/12	Development of final draft of Youth Survey	Choose and refine the appropriate questions for survey	Deja Jenkins		
1/17/12	Development of Model – sessions 4-6 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for next three sessions of Transformation Model	Rev. Angela Ryan		
1/24/12	Site Team meeting	Review lesson plans for sessions 1-6 and Youth Survey questions	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
2/10/12	Youth Survey administered and collected	Team goes into high school to conduct survey	Deja Jenkins and Designee	\$200.00 for incentive meal	Site Team
2/15/12	Development of Model – sessions 7-9 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for next three sessions of Transformation Model	Rev. Angela Ryan		
2/20/12	Awareness Video production	Video footage arranged to raise awareness	Rev. Angela Ryan and Darin Kent	\$1,000.00	In-kind contributions by church and donors solicited for program
2/29/12	Site Team meeting	Review lesson plans for sessions 7-9 and Awareness Video and develop pre-post Video Awareness questionnaire	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
3/7/12	Selection of Design/Promo Team	Based on criteria, establish a Design/Promotional Team	Rev. Angela Ryan		
3/10/12	Promotional activity of Promo Team begins	Promo Team will promote the addiction and spirituality workshop and 12-session Transformational Model	Promo Team	\$100.00 for promotional materials (e.g., flyers, brochures and palm cards)	In-kind contributions by church and donors solicited for program
3/15/12	Development of Model – sessions 10-12 lessons	Prepare lesson plans for last three sessions of Transformation Model	Rev. Angela Ryan		
3/16/12	Showing of Awareness Video	Invite different ministries of Greater Centennial to view the Awareness Video with pre-post questionnaire and a discussion afterwards	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team		
3/30/12	Addiction and Spirituality Workshop	Seminar on the fundamentals of addiction and spirituality and its benefits to combat addiction. Workshop	Rev. Angela Ryan Dr. Howard Fogel Deja Jenkins		

		will include presentation of quantitative results of Youth Survey.			
3/30/12	Production of handbook for 12 session model	Compilation of lesson plans and supporting documents to facilitate class instruction	Rev. Angela Ryan & Site Team	\$500.00	In-kind contributions by church and donors solicited for program
4/1/12	The 12-session Transformational Model lessons begin	Site Team videographer will record relevant information	Jesus Piece Productions (Darin Kent)		
5/7/12	Draft first-month project observations and evaluations of program	Design/Promo Team and Site Team gather to review progress	Rev. Angela Ryan, Site Team & Design/Promo Team		
6/7/12	Begin to develop social media outlet for interaction	Set up blogging type area for 24-hour communication and prayer	Deja Jenkins & Darin Kent		
6/15/12	Draft second-month project observations and evaluations of program	Design/Promo Team and Site Team gather to review progress	Rev. Angela Ryan, Site Team & Design/Promo Team		
7/7/12	Draft third-month project observations and evaluations of program	Design/Promo Team and Site Team gather to review progress	Rev. Angela Ryan, Site Team & Design/Promo Team		
8/1/12	Begin preparing Church Guide/Model for Recovery	Based on the results of the 12-session program and the two workshops, Rev. Angela Ryan will draft Church Guide	Rev. Angela Ryan & Production Team		
9/1/12	Begin development of dissertation video	Begin the editing and writing process for the video	Rev. Angela Ryan, Darin Kent and Promo/Design Team	\$1,000.00	In-kind contributions by church and donors solicited for program
9/1/12	Begin drafting dissertation	Four-month process to draft	Rev. Angela Ryan		
9/15/12	Distribution of Church Guide/Model	Distribute handbook to churches in the community	Rev. Angela Ryan & Production Team		
1/15/13	Submit first draft of dissertation & video to NYTS	Dissertation and accompanying video are submitted to NYTS	Rev. Angela Ryan		
2/1/13	Approval of Demonstration Project draft	Submission of Demonstration Project to NYTS	Dr. Wanda Lundy		
4/1/13	Oral presentation	Based on Demonstration Project results and research, give oral presentation	Rev. Angela Ryan		
5/1/13	Graduation		Rev. Angela Ryan		

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APPENDIX B

A GREATER WAY OF LIFE RECOVERY MISSION STATEMENT

“A GREATER WAY OF LIFE” RECOVERY MINISTRY

MISSION STATEMENT

To encourage recovery and deliverance from various substances, destructive life patterns, and sinful ways. We also dedicate ourselves to raising awareness and educating our congregation and community about the many forms of addiction.

APPENDIX C **PRAYER CLASS EVALUATION**

Comments from Class Evaluation Forms
The Power of Prayer – Sister Angie Ryan

Strengths

The interaction among the entire class including the instructor and letting each member participate is on opening or closing prayer.

Fellowship with one another

Sis Angie is a dynamic teacher, preacher, and motivator and can captivate & cultivate your attention. Definitely blessed just by being in her class and hearing anything she has to say.

The material information we learned was very good. Sis Angie thought was excellent.

Easy to understand beneficial to my prayer life. Teacher was always available for questions and a phone call away. Course was great

Being instructed by Sis. Angie and the fellowship and learning from other students

Learning how to apply scripture to prayer

The fellowship; a teacher that's on fire for God; Making Christian friends and sharing

It was well taught. Sis Angie covered course in a way that really helped me to improve my prayer life.

I was able to buildup more of a prayer life. It was very beneficial with my walk with Christ

Improvement Needs

Needs no improvement

The course needs a book

Have a bigger classroom

More time and materials

Some refreshments like water. Perhaps a guest speaker of CD-teacher to hear another's perspective on prayer. Start on time and end on time

I like structure, so maybe a syllabus next time so you can prepare at home what the next topic will be or maybe we can make suggestions on the topics that we need the most

Comments

This class keeps me joined to the church. I was only taking the class because the church I attended didn't have this extra activity, so thanks to the class and the members that I am now a member.

I have grown a lot since taking this class. I look forward to Monday nights. Sis. Angie is a wonderful instructor. She is knowledgeable, compassionate and a warrior for Christ. I look forward to next year.

The course was excellent. It needs to be more discipline in ending on time. It was supposed to be 7pm-830pm but frequently goes until 9, 9:30 & 9:45. I found this to be somewhat annoying

It has helped me in my growth of praying & scripture and allowed me to be confident in what to need and ask God knowing that I will receive according to his promises in the scriptures.

Time should be adhered to.

Sis Angie is an excellent teacher

The instructor was inspired, anointed, informed and effective. She offered a great deal because of her own influences

We need more teachers in the ministry. I thank God for using her in such a time as this.

APPENDIX D

LETTER FROM ELAINE BRYANT

February 8, 2012

Pastor Darin Moore
Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church
114 West 4th Street
Mt. Vernon, NY 10801

Dear Pastor Moore:

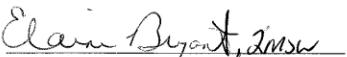
I am writing this letter on behalf of Reverend Angela Ryan. Several months ago I met with Reverend Ryan to discuss the need for spirituality in substance abuse programs as a part of recovery. It has always been a dream of mine to incorporate spirituality into the outpatient substance abuse program, which I am the Program Director.

Reverend Ryan explained to me that holistically it was beneficial to address the damaged spirit of those using drugs. I did not need much convincing because I always knew that everyone does not get their recovery through Narcotics Anonymous or Alcoholic Anonymous. Reverend Angela Ryan and I both agreed that a program such as this would be beneficial not just to Archway, but to the community & the church. Rev Ryan began to come in every Wednesday for one hour and teach from Rick Warren's "A Purpose Driven Life". Needless to say, the clients love the spirituality group and the program itself is a beneficial aspect of treatment. It has been eight months and the rest is history.

During the holiday season of 2011, Greater Centennial's GLAD class #65 came to Archway and fellowshiped with the clients. This is the first time that a church has ever come to a treatment program and it was well received by clients and staff. Ministry of this nature is truly ground breaking work.

I would like to commend Rev Ryan on her vision, commitment and on-going efforts to bridge the gap between the clergy and the outpatient facilities in the Mt. Vernon community.

Respectfully Submitted


Elaine Bryant, LMSW, CASAC
Program Director

APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM

New York Theological Seminary Informed Consent Form

Introduction: My name is Angela Ryan, and I am a student at New York Theological Seminary conducting research for my Doctorate of Ministry Dissertation. My phone number is (914) 309-9208. My email is: ryaangie46@aol.com. My research supervisor's name is Dr. Wanda Lundy. His/her phone number is (212) 870-2101. Her email is wlundy@nyts.edu. Feel free to contact either of us at any time if you have questions about this study.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to study _____ at
(name of congregation or institution) _____.
I am trying to learn more about _____

Procedure: If you consent to participating in this study, you will be asked to participate in the following ways by _____

Time required: The project will begin on _____ and conclude on _____. You are being asked to commit to _____

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may still decline to participate in any of the sessions or answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. You are completely free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Risks: There are no known risks associated with this study. In any human subject research involving self-disclosure, there is always the possibility that you may feel discomfort or distress in the course of the research. If this happens, please inform me immediately.

Benefits: While there are no guaranteed benefits, it is possible that you may enjoy participating in this research and/or sharing your responses to research questions, or that you will find the project personally or spiritually meaningful. This study is intended to benefit _____

Confidentiality/Anonymity: Your name will be kept confidential in all of the reporting and/or writing related to this study. I will be the only person present during the project's research. When I write the final paper, I will use pseudonyms – made-up names – for all participants, unless you specify in writing that you wish to be identified by name.

If you wish to choose your own **pseudonym** for the study, please indicate the first name you would like me to use for you here: _____

Importance of Candor: It is essential to this kind of research that **all responses from participants be open, candid, forthright, and honest.**

Sharing the results: Results of research may be shared through class presentation, in written form, or in other ways. I anticipate that the results of this research will be shared in the following ways: _____

Publication: This is the possibility that I may publish this study or refer to it in published writing in the future. In this event, I will continue to use pseudonyms (as described above) and I may alter some identifying details in order to further protect your anonymity.

Before you sign: By signing below, you are agreeing to participate in this project with the possibility of being audio-taped, videotaped, photographed, and your words being written in a final paper. Be sure that any questions you may have are answered to your full satisfaction before signing this document. If you agree to participate in this study, a copy of this document will be given to you. Separate copies will be kept in a sealed

envelope in a locked file cabinet in the New York Theological Seminary Dean's office and by the researcher.

Participant's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

Parent or guardian's signature (required for participants under the age of 18):

_____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

APPENDIX F

“CATCHY PHRASES”

Stages and Phases of Transformation (catchy phrases)

The Process is Required: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Innovation: Exceed Where You Are

Rebirth: Stages and Phases of Transformation

New Direction: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Path To Destiny

Progress is the Optimum Goal: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Growing & Going: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Moving Forward and Backward at the Same Time

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Development is Essential: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Spiritualization, Education=Liberation

APPENDIX G

MEDIA REQUEST FORM

Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church	312 South 8 th Ave Mount Vernon , New York 10550 Phone: 914.664.1838 Fax: 914.664.2067 E-Mail: mm@greatercentennial.org Web: www.greatercentennial.org
--------------------------------------	--

Complete Title of Approved Ministry Event:	Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation	Date:	3/30/2012
Type of Meeting:	Workshop/Panel Discussion	Time:	7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Ministry Event Coordinator:	Marilyn Nelson	Location:	BHJ Chapel
Coordinator Contact Info:		Topic:	Spirituality & Addiction
Panelists:		Rev. Angela Ryan Dr. Howard Fogel Sis. Marilyn Drayton Deja Jenkins	

Approved Event Media Request Form

Presenter Name: Rev. Angela Ryan
Who is your target audience? Persons in recovery that desire more spiritualy and are in need of education.
What message do you want displayed on the promotional materials to inform and inspire participation/attendance? Recovery Ministry Open House featuring Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation This is a new recovery initiative that is being led by Rev. Angela Ryan. Come hear from a panel of recovery care professionals about the problems of addiction. Learn about an innovative solution. All ages welcome. Begin your new path to destiny.
Sponsored by the Recovery Ministry
Do you have a vision of the image you'd like projected to promote the ministry event? Feel free to choose Flyer shall say Ministry Leader: Marilyn Nelson In the body of the flyer list: Facilitator: Rev. Angela Ryan
What promotional material are you requesting? Check all that apply. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Brochure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A/V Screen Template <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greater Works Ad <input type="checkbox"/> Poster Website Ad <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Explain In Detail): We are respectfully asking for 250 copies. Thank you.

APPENDIX H
NATURES-MIRACLE BUTTERFLY IMAGE



APPENDIX I
WORKSHOP FLYER

Greater Centennial AME Zion Church
114 West 4th Street, Mount Vernon, NY 10710
914-664-1838
Rev. Dr. W. Darin Moore, Pastor

Marilyn Nelson, Ministry Leader

Recovery Ministry invites you to
PROGRESSION IN SESSION
STAGES & PHASES OF TRANSFORMATION
Facilitator: Rev. Angela Ryan

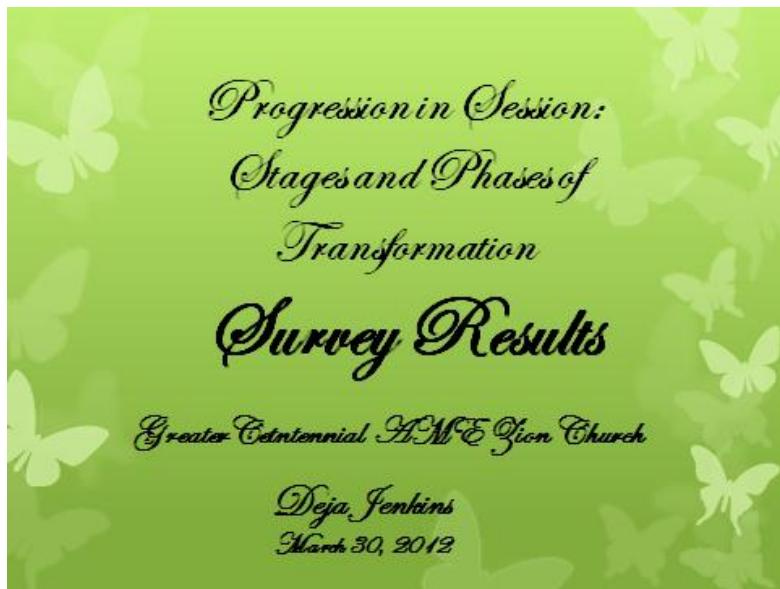
Friday, March 30
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Join us and hear from a panel of recovery-care professionals
about the problems of addiction and an innovative solution.
All are welcome.

APPENDIX J
AWARENESS VIDEO

Please see DVD marked “Awareness Video.”

APPENDIX K
POWERPOINT PRESENTATION, YOUTH SURVEY



What is the number one reason teens try alcohol or drugs?

- Peer Pressure
- Stress
- Experiment
- Like it
- Parental Influence

How do teens first obtain alcohol and drugs?

- Friends
- Parents
- At Parties
- Other People
- On their own

Why do teens continue to use alcohol and drugs

- Addiction
- Like It
- Stress
- Peer pressure
- Experimentation

What kinds of alcohol and drugs have you ever tried?

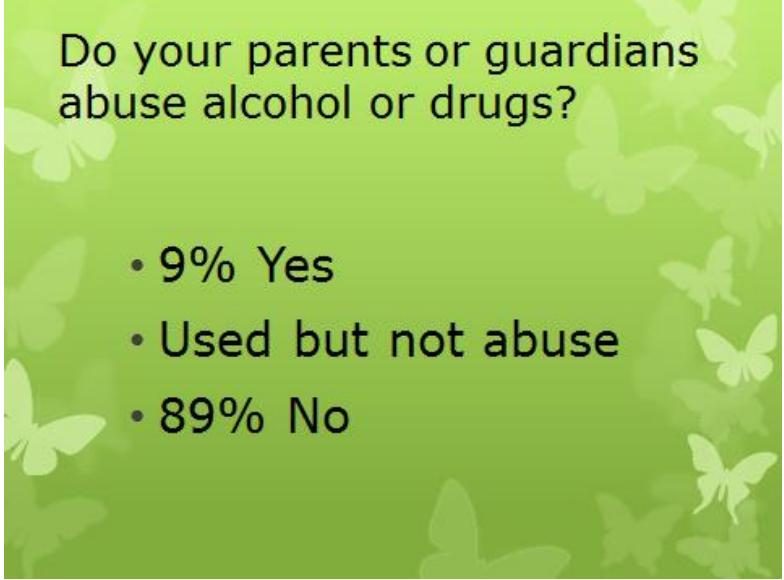
- Wine
 - Jack Daniels
 - Vodka
 - Ciroc
 - Smiroff
 - Weed
 - Champagne
 - Pina Colada
- Nothing
 - Rum
 - Beer
 - Prescription drugs
 - Sangria
 - Grey Goose
 - Hennessy
 - Bacardi

Have you used drugs...

- In the past 30 days?
- In the past year?

Have you used alcohol...

- In the past 30 days?
- In the past year?



Do your parents or guardians abuse alcohol or drugs?

- 9% Yes
- Used but not abuse
- 89% No



What harm can alcohol or drugs do to your body?

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| • Liver | • Judgment |
| • Death | • lungs |
| • Brain damage | • Lose body function |
| • Kidneys | • Heart |
| • Paralysis | • Diabetes |
| • Appearance | • Slow development |
| • Urinary | • All organs |
| • Cancer | |

How hard do you think it is to become addicted to alcohol or drugs?

- Very Easy
- Easy
- Somewhat Hard
- Hard
- Very Hard

APPENDIX L

WORKSHOP QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the answer that best describes your present view.

1. In the recent survey conducted with Thorton High School students, the number one reason why teens first tried alcohol or drugs was:
 - a. the pleasurable effects of drugs and alcohol
 - b. peer pressure and a desire to fit in
 - c. to help cope with depression and anxiety
 - d. family conflict

2. What percentage of Thorton High School students stated that they used alcohol or other drugs?
a. 25% b. 45% c. 65% d. 75%

3. What percentage of Thorton High School students stated that it was either somewhat hard, hard or very hard to become addicted to alcohol or drugs?
a. 10% b. 25% c. 33% d. 50%

4. Approximately _____ people in the United States suffer from some form of addiction.
a. 14 million b. 24 million c. 34 million d. 44 million

5. Approximately _____ of those who suffer from addiction are not currently seeking treatment for their addiction.
a. 25% b. 35% c. 50% d. 80%

6. State the two groups that are currently underserved in substance abuse treatment facilities in the United States. _____

7. What percentage of individuals in Mt. Vernon currently seek treatment for addiction in a church program?
a. 1% b. 5% c. 10% d. 20%

8. Out of the five largest churches in Mt. Vernon how many have Recovery Ministry's providing holistic treatment (a wholeness approach) for persons in recovery?
a. 1 b. 2 c. 3 d. 4 e. 5

9. The model being proposed for the Progression in Session classes (which will start in April here at the church) will combine which of the two following elements?
a. spirituality and nutrition b. spirituality and outpatient family therapy
c. spirituality and education d. spirituality and 12-step meetings

10. Transformation refers to:
a. a switch from inpatient to outpatient treatment
b. shifting from the use of illegal substances to the use of alcohol
c. transitioning from self- examination to making amends

d. a marked change in a person that occurs from the inside-out as evidenced from one's spiritual condition, appearance, emotional and mental capacities, behaviors and attitudes

How did you find out about the Workshop.

- a. flyer b. a friend c. a relative d. Facebook e. Twitter f. other:
-

Why have you chosen to attend this Workshop (please circle all that apply)?

- a. for myself b. for a friend c. for a family member d. other: _____

Are you currently affiliated with the Greater Centennial Church?

a. Yes

b. No

APPENDIX M
REGISTRATION FORM



**Progression in Session
Stages & Phases of Transformation
Registration Form: 12-Session Class
Rev. Angela Ryan, Facilitator**

Name:	
Street Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip Code:	
E-Mail Address:	
Home Phone:	
Cell Phone:	
Check One:	<input type="checkbox"/> Registering Today
	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Registering, But Will Follow Up with Facilitator

APPENDIX N

SIGN-IN SHEET WORKSHOP



Please Sign In

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

APPENDIX O

PROGRAM BOOKLET, SYLLABUS AND CURRICULUM



BIO
 The Reverend Angela Ryan is an Associate Minister at the Greater Centennial A.M. E. Zion Church in Mount Vernon, New York. Born in Harlem, New York, and migrated to Mount Vernon at the age of two, Rev. Ryan experienced a series of rough times growing up, but found that with God all things are possible. One of the "poor choices" that she made in life was to drop out of school after her first semester of college in 1975. She did not return to school officially until 27 years later in 2002, receiving her Bachelor's degree in Psychology in 2009 from *The College of New Rochelle New Resources* as the valedictorian of her graduating class, holding honors of summa cum laude. The grace of God allowed her to then receive a full Stafford Diversity scholarship to one of the top seminaries in the world, *Drew Theological Seminary*, in Madison, New Jersey. It was at this institution where she graduated May 16, 2009, receiving her Masters of Divinity degree with honors of cum laude. On October 12, 2011, Rev. Ryan was accepted at *New York Theological Seminary* to fulfill God's purpose on her life and is now in her third year of pursuing her Doctorate of Ministry degree.

Rev. Ryan entered formal ministry preaching her trial sermon on March 13, 2005, at Greater Centennial A.M.E. Zion Church, where the pastor is the Reverend Dr. W. Darin Moore. She was ordained a Deacon in October 2009, and ordained with the highest ordination in the A.M.E. Zion Church as an *Elder* on October 1, 2011. Both ordinations were done by Bishop George E. Battle. Currently, Rev. Ryan is appointed to serve as the Assistant Minister of the Discipleship, Evangelism & Outreach, Prayer and Prison Ministries at her church. Formerly, she served as minister and leader over the Recovery Ministry for seven years. Rev. Ryan has served others passionately within the context of counseling and teaching the homeless at shelters, and is presently teaching (voluntarily) at a drug treatment facility. She is also doing extensive work within the context of her Doctorate that involves Social Justice and Spirituality as it relates to those with past and present addictions. Her research includes both congregations and communities. More than anything that is embedded within this bio, Rev. Ryan loves the Lord. She has turned her back on the world and made a solid commitment to walk with Jesus for the rest of her life.

PROGRESSION IN SESSION STAGES AND PHASES OF TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM

Scripture: Romans 12:1-2
 Prayer
 Opening Remarks: Leader of Recovery Ministry, Sis. Marilyn Nelson
 Introduction of Facilitator: Sis. Marilyn Nelson
 Introduction of Presenters: Rev. Angela Ryan

First Presenter: Deja Jenkins
 Ms. Deja Jenkins will report the results of a quantitative study done at Nellie Thornton High School, extracting the perspectives of what students in grades 9-12 think/feel about drugs and alcohol in today's culture. Deja is the goddaughter of Rev. Ryan a senior at Thornton HS and also a recipient of Judge Judy's "Her Honor" scholarship. She will be attending college in September.

Second Presenter: Dr. Howard Fogel
 The scope of the Drug/Alcohol Problem, Treatment Issues, Under-served Populations, and Theories of Addiction are subjects that will be discussed by Dr. Howard Fogel, PhD, CASAC. He is an educational director at the Center for Addiction Studies and Research and brings an abundance of knowledge and expertise from the NY City State OASAS (Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services). Dr. Fogel was a former professor of Rev. Ryan, during her undergraduate work in psychology. He is partnering with her to achieve this needed program.

Third Presenter: Ms. Elaine Bryant
 Ms. Bryant will report on the essential values that out-patient programs have to persons in their recovery process. Ms. Bryant is an Associate of Rev. Ryan and holds the degrees of both Masters of Social Work, and CASAC. She is supporting this type of program believing it will help persons in recovery.

Fourth Presenter: Rev. Angela Ryan (Assistant Minister of Discipleship, Evangelism & Outreach) . Will share the vision God has given her regarding an innovative solution/recovery option that can have a significant impact on the Church and the community

Stages and Phases of Transformation Syllabus

This course is designed to: help individuals in the recovery process (and those who may work in the field) understand the value that the synthesis of spirituality and education can have on their lives as a holistic treatment option.

Rev. Angela Ryan
Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion church
(914) 309-9208

Hours to be reached- 10:00 a.m.—9:00 p.m.

At Completion: Participants will have spiritually matured (based on ongoing Biblical and Christian teachings) and also be substantially motivated to plan their next course of action academically. Additionally, participants will have resources/contacts from visiting contributors to the classes. We will make at least one field trip to a campus setting.

Course Objectives: To provide participants with the needed “mentoring,” which will help them in their recovery process. To inspire participants to broaden their scope academically leading to “empowerment” and transformation. To orient participants to “discipleship,” which will help them grow in their spiritually and Christian walk. To introduce an innovative Recovery program/ministry to the church community emphasizing that spiritualization and education can be a means of liberation. This course focuses more on the *individual* achieving accomplishments holistically as opposed to one concentrating on the specific *illness* that often delays a person from reaching their destiny.

Meeting Time The class is being held for only 12 weeks. (Each session is 90 minutes). To familiarize participants with the classroom and grading structure of institutions-- a Certificate of Completion will be awarded to those who attend all sessions. You can complete and graduate from this groundbreaking project!

Curriculum:

Session 1: Pathway to Progress (The reason we are here ---Introduction to the class/ going over the syllabus together) What to expect from this class while embarking down a new path to reach your Destiny (Question and Answer period)

Session 2: A Journey With Purpose “God’s Purpose for your Life” Rick Warren: Purpose Driven Life Chapter 1 (Jer. 29:11)

Session 3: Your Steps have Been Ordered (Psalm 37:23) --God places us in the right place at the right time.

Session 4: A Key Essential for New Direction Renewing the Spirit of the Mind (pg. 9-25)
Casey Treat Spirit of the Mind (Eph. 4:23 KJV)

Session 5 Transformation Leads to Alteration “The Process of Change” Casey Treat Spirit of the Mind (pg. 17, 59-73) (Rom 12:2)

Session 6: Spinning a New Web (Decision Making) “A Caterpillar is a Butterfly in Disguise” (pg. 28)— Casey Treat Spirit of the Mind (Joshua 24:17-27)

Session 7: Knowledge is Critical to the Thought Process (Hosea 4:6)

Session 8: The Crucial Tool to Reach Your Destiny The Value of Wisdom (Prov. 8)

Session 9: The Necessary Relationship You need to Ascend to God’s Purpose for your Life (Psalm 63:8)

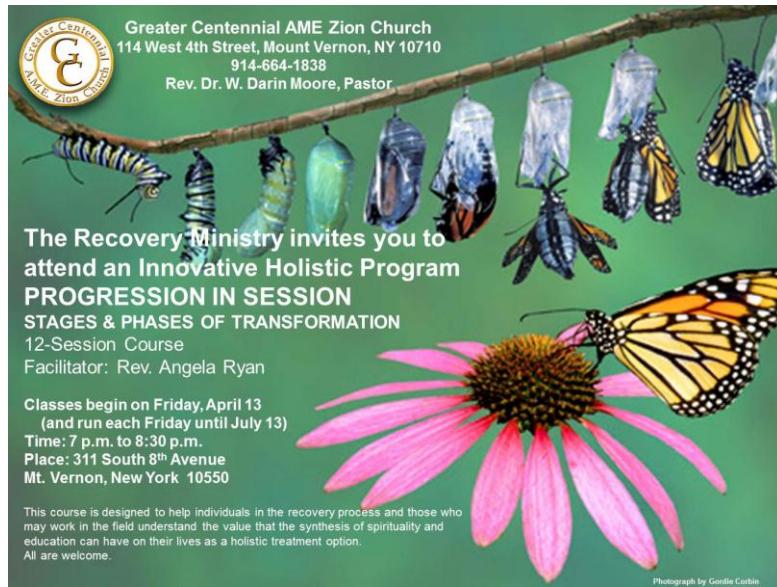
Session 10: A New Outlook The Value of Education in the life of a person in Recovery
“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Session 11: Destination-- Visits from College representatives

Session 12: “Flying” to your Purpose----- Field Trip to College Campus

APPENDIX P

FLYER FOR 12-SESSION COURSE



APPENDIX Q

IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT FORM

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation
Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

In Class Assignment

Name: _____

1. Please briefly describe your spirituality: (a) intimate with God (b) know God exists
(c) attend church occasionally. Explain how you want to progress:

2. Please briefly describe your recovery status: (a) clean – one day or more (b) active/life unmanageable. Explain how you want to progress:

3. Please briefly describe your education: (a) Some high school (b) GED (c) High School graduate (d) College degree. Explain how you want to progress:

APPENDIX R

TAKE-HOME ESSAY FORM

Stages and Phases of Transformation Progression in Session Class
Rev. Angela Ryan
6/8/12

Take Home Essay

Please write an essay on the following. A) Give your suggestions for how the Church can better understand people in the Recovery process. B) Also include how the Progression in Session class has helped you grow both spiritually and academically. (Be specific about what you have learned.) Your essay will be stronger if you include *Scriptures* and *quotes* from the former sessions. (You may use the handout sheets, class notes, and any personal stories you want to write your essay.) Note** The Essay IS TO BE 1-2 PAGES (one essay on both subjects).

A good beginning for (part A) of your essay could be... If my Voice could be heard and I could share some of my thoughts with the Church about how they could (understand or treat) people in recovery, I would tell them.... The reason I feel this way is because...

A good beginning for (part B) of your essay could be... I did not know what to expect when I signed up for this course, but since taking it my writing skills and listening abilities have increased.

Helpful hints for your essay--Be sure to include examples that inspired you from any aspect of the classroom experience (small groups, session book, writing on the board, closing prayer, fellowship, food, etc.).

To my Students, this is your opportunity to express yourself creatively. As your Instructor, I believe in you and know that you can do it. Just do your best, whatever level you are at, and write a strong essay.
Rev. Angie Ryan

*"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.
Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

APPENDIX S

SYNOPSIS SESSION 11

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation
Session Eleven: Education Symposium (See attached program booklet)
July 6, 2012

The forum opened with Sister Robin Tomlin reading James 1:5, emphasizing wisdom. Brother Darin Kent (DK) then led the group in prayer, asking that we all learn something new tonight.

Rev. Angie told the students there have been 11 classes since the beginning of this profound journey. She informed the students that she was proud of their many accomplishments. Rev. Angie then reminded the class that the following week would be the tour to NYTS and that the bus would be leaving at 6:30 p.m. On Saturday, July 14, 2012, there will be a graduation fellowship at Greater Centennial and everyone could sign up to bring a dish. Rev. Angie had graded the essays the students wrote. They were eager to see them that night.

The entire focus of this session was on educational opportunities. Rev. Angie introduced the speakers:

Nancy Fitch, who is 92, has worked at the Literacy Volunteers of America (serving Westchester and Rockland), located in the Mt. Vernon Public Library, for 21 years. She began by thanking Rev. Angie for the opportunity to speak to the class and for the work Pastor Moore does in the community.

Ms. Fitch grew up in Scarsdale, where her parents were a maid and butler for a household. Ms. Fitch first started as an office coordinator. For a time, there were 40 volunteers and 80 students. Now, Ms. Fitch is both the coordinator and the tutor. Her hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 12-4. She tutors in small groups. Currently, Ms. Fitch has 22 learners, who she helps with reading and comprehension skills. Ms. Fitch can assist with basics for a GED. She teaches up to the fifth-grade level. Ms. Fitch pointed out that the Mt. Vernon library also has a GED program, which is separate from the Literacy Volunteers of America.

Every February, there is an African American reading chain, where books are read that are either written by African American authors or about African Americans. From time to time, Ms. Fitch organizes pizza parties. She feels she is part of a family. During her 21 years, she has taught 700-800 learners and has received approximately 30 honors.

At the end of the program, Ms. Fitch told the class may all their dreams come true. She then left literature about the program for the students.

One of the students, Robin Tomlin, thanked her for coming and said she is a wonderful person and that the entire class was truly blessed to hear from her. As Ms. Fitch had to leave early (doesn't drive in the dark), Rev. Angie asked Robin Tomlin to walk her to her car.

APPENDIX T
NYTS PICTURES FROM DR. DIAZ



APPENDIX U

LEADERS GUIDEBOOK

“Stages and Phases of Transformation”

“Progression in Session”
12-Session Course

LEADERS GUIDEBOOK

© Original Program Design by Rev. Angela Ryan, April 13, 2012, as part of her Doctoral Project
The Program was first instituted at Greater Centennial A.M.E Zion Church, Mt. Vernon, New
York 10550

At the 311 So. 8th Ave. Building & the Belvie H. Jackson Chapel. The first session ran
successfully April through July 2012, under the leadership and permission of the pastor, Rev. Dr.
W. Darin Moore.

*Stages and Phases of Transformation
Progression in Session*

12-Session Course

Table of Contents

Session One: Pathway to Progress

Session Two: A Journey with Purpose

Session Three: Your Steps have Been Ordered

Session Four: A Key Essential for New Direction

Session Five: Transformation Leads to Alteration

Session Six: Spinning a New Web (Decision Making)

Session Seven: Knowledge is Critical to the Thought Process

Session Eight: The Crucial Tool Needed to Reach Your Destiny: The Value of
Wisdom

Session Nine: The Necessary Relationship for Ascending into God's Purpose for
Your Life

Session Ten: A New Outlook

Session Eleven: Nearing Your Destination

Session Twelve: Flying to Your Purpose

Appendix: Session Sheets
 Innovative Solutions Diagram
 Bibliography

Foreword

“Progression in Session” is a 12-week course designed to help individuals in the recovery process, and those who may work in the field, to understand the value that the synthesis of spirituality and education can have on their lives as a holistic treatment option. Churches have a mandate to help persons in recovery, at whatever stage or phase they are in, contributing positively towards their “emotional healing,” “educational advancement,” and eventual “economic empowerment.” It is important for those with past and present addictions to be encouraged to look to, and (want to) include, the Church as viable means of recovery.

“Progression in Session” is a transformative experience for both Instructor and students comparative to the ministry of Jesus Christ. If you are in substantial recovery and/or want to initiate a similar program in your church that can positively impact those that come into the church with the same or similar background, you will love teaching or being a part of this course. “Progression in Session” will also bring the love of Jesus in your church by you emulating and embracing the way that Jesus related to “the least of these” in doing ministry. Insightfully, by you intentionally teaching and reaching out to the recovering population—you’ve done it unto Him (Jesus). (Matthew 25:40)

As part of my Doctoral studies, I have designed this Guidebook (inclusive of CD and Transformational Video) to become a transformational model with the intent of helping other churches duplicate the design for effective Recovery programs.

The course has been designed rather easily to be taught by someone who has a sincere desire to help persons in the recovery process as well as for those who believe in

the “Progression in Session” concept (the synchronicity of Spirituality and Education as an effective methodology of treatment).

This dynamic program, once offered into any churches genre of ministries, has the potential to highly enhance the “outreach efforts” that are sought to accomplish congregational and community building. It cannot be denied that individuals with past and present addictions make up part of our congregations. These persons can benefit tremendously from positive information, inspiration, and illumination that a church Recovery program can offer. Therefore, an innovative solution (*Spirituality and Education*) such as “Progression in Session” is a must-have program for any church in today’s culture.

Acknowledgements

The *Stages and Phases of Transformation* “Progression in Session” course would not be a program without the many contributions and support of God-selected individuals. I must recognize the following persons, who have helped me to birth and bring God’s project to life. These individuals have been a tremendous help while I have been in my season of crafting and creativeness. Collectively, we have cultivated “Progression in Session” to be a program that glorifies God. Together we have watched lives become transformed.

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Spirituality & Addiction Workshop

Before the *Stages and Phases of Transformation* “Progression in Session” course is taught, it would be most effective if the Instructor held a *Spirituality and Addiction Workshop*. It should be held in the same church/place where the program will be taught. This informative and inspirational session can take place anytime within two weeks of the first session. For best results, the church should take full advantage of all methods of advertising of the workshop via flyers, Facebook, Twitter, etc. The target audience or demographic that your church is attempting to reach through this workshop are those members of your congregation and community who can benefit in some way. This includes anyone who is or may know someone affected by the disease of addiction. Particularly, those in the recovering population who desire edification and education would find this course transformative).

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When planning the workshop, the estimated time that should be allocated is at least two hours. In this way, thorough presentations can be made by the individuals presenting, while also being considerate of participants’ time. Forms that will be helpful for statistical purposes should be created and generated for the workshop. Both Scripture and prayer should be included as part of the opening of the *Spirituality and Addiction Workshop*. Moreover, the Instructor of the program and/or team members should prayerfully select a panel of qualified persons who will come and speak at the workshop. PowerPoint presentations and videos should be encouraged for the presenters as to enhance the quality of the workshop. Also, a program booklet should be designed and handed out to show what will be covered at the workshop. At a specific portion of the workshop, there should be an introduction of “Progression in Session” as an innovative solution of treatment for persons in recovery that is being offered in church-based settings. The Instructor (if he or she chooses) can be on the panel to present the program, or train and have someone else to educate the audience on the introduction of “Progression in Session” course into the church and community. The church should provide some type of banquet type repast (assorted beverages, muffins, cakes, cookies, or light meal) for those who attend the workshop. There should be a welcome and understanding spirit for persons in the recovering population, and their families by the church. By this, I mean extending a spirit of inclusion (by the Incarnate God Jesus and His Church), not perpetuating indications of exclusion. Prayer as the workshop began is to end the workshop. The Holy Spirit should take over the workshop and compel persons to want to become involved! From the above *Spirituality and Addiction Workshop*, participants will register to take the 12-session “Progression in Session” course being offered by your church.

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Instructor's Guidebook

Session One

Session Name: Pathway to Progress

Scripture: *Matthew 7:14 Prayer*

Class Forepart (Any Instructor teaching this course will begin in the following manner)

- Welcome to all Students, The Instructor is to give his or her name, position, and express the reason for teaching course.
- Pass out the Attendance Sheet. Students should sign in as they arrive.
- Pass out the Registration Form, which should be completed before class begins, to individuals who did not fill them out at the previous *Spirituality and Addiction Workshop*. A specific team should be created prior to the class to assist the Instructor with this endeavor.
- Provide name tags to students to help both Instructor and students remember each other's names.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read the above **Scripture**, which will be found on Session One class handout.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.

Class Introduction

- Instructor is to introduce "***Progression in Session***" class to the students as being a Recovery Program, describing it is an ***innovative solution*** (a treatment option) that is designed for church-based settings.
- Draw the diagram of innovative solution (which can be found in the appendix of the Guidebook) on board that describes what the program offers. Encourage the students to make the decision to complete the 12-session course.
- Present the clear challenge to the students that the lack of such a program has in our community (give statistics based on gathered research).
- **Student Participation:** Instructor is to share with the class the following. Note this class is not designed to be taught solely "lecture style." Therefore, participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. Student participation gives students a chance to share their thoughts on the class material being taught. Instructor is to, 1) Ask students their names and the reason they are taking the class? Instructor is to write the person's name and his/her answer on board. 2) Have students pick one of the quotes on session handout sheet that inspire them the most and ask them to explain why they are encouraged from the saying (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring a Bible with them to each session for the sole intention of their spiritual

growth and development Instructor is to 1) Exegete the session Scripture above (Draw on the blackboard a *wide gate* vs. *narrow gate* for visual imagery). Also the Instructor is to 2) Give verbal examples of how easy it is to go through the wide gate, which leads to destruction from a worldly perspective (power, prestige, position, materialism, etc.).

Share how many go through the wide gate. Contrastingly discuss how difficult it is to travel through the narrow gate, which leads to life. Examples that reflect the narrow gate could be, practicing prayer, forgiveness and pursuing God's purpose for your life.

Instructor is to make these examples identifiable to life situations and describe how *very few walk through the narrow gate*. Instructor should also encourage the students that just by their regular attendance in this class, it will be a sign that they have entered the narrow gate.

- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** Instructor is to use his or her teaching ability to explain to the students the following: Show the students that embedded within the word "***Progression***" is the word "***Progress***." Give the students a working definition for the word "Progress." When defining the word, show the clear difference between ("Progress" using *God's intention for our lives*) vs. ("Success" from the world's perspective). Also discuss the word "Progress" in the following context: 1) "Progress" and being in a relationship with Christ, 2) "Progress" as it relates to having a consistent "commitment" of service to God, 3) "Progress" as it relates to one going in the "correct direction" in life , and 4) "Progress" as a student engages in a "classroom experience" to enhance his or her future.
- **Review Syllabus and Course Curriculum with students.** Students should participate in the reading. During this time, the Instructor will share with students what is expected of them while embarking upon this new path toward their destiny. The books that lessons will be taught from in the course can be shown to students at this time, although this course is not taught from a single text.
- Class members are to develop a set of *working guidelines* for the class to be called a **Class Covenant**. The Instructor will transcribe the list and submit it to the students the following week as a handout.
- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).

Class Finish

- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests to be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Two

Session Name: A Journey with Purpose

Scripture: *Rom. 8:26-28* (vs.28 main verse)

Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Instructor is to discuss "Progression in Session Class." Instructor is to also go over the Introduction from the previous week, reminding students of the importance of this type of class, and why the program was developed. **Redraw diagram** (found in appendix) showing the innovation of the program in a clear and visual way.
- **Student Participation:** Note this class is not designed to be taught solely by "lecture style." Therefore, participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on the class material being taught. 1) Instructor is to go around the class and **ask each student, "What is your Purpose?"** 2) Instructor is to also write answers on the board and encourage students to take notes, so they can become familiar with their classmates goals. The idea of prompting students to write will help them to become familiar with classroom style, setting, and structure.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring a Bible with them to each session for the sole intention of their spiritual growth and development. Instructor is to exegete the above Scripture (*Rom. 8:28*) emphasizing what "God's Purpose" is from a spiritual perspective.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** 1) Have students pick one of the six quotes that inspire the student the most and explain to class why. (Or) students can say something about the contributor of the quote. 2) Instructor is to give a working definition for the word "purpose," i.e., what God created one to do. In addition, the Instructor will discuss God's "purpose" for one's life versus one's current "position" and "problems." (Joseph's story in Genesis is a helpful analogy.) God's purpose should also be juxtaposed to "preparation" and "progression" for one's life. All denotations discussed will be put on the board for students to transfer into their notebooks.
- **Session Book:** *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren. (Introduce book and author).
- **Teach Lesson:** Instructor is to summarize and discuss three points from the first three chapters. **1)** Your Purpose is Not about You, Your Purpose is All About God, Your Purpose is for A Divine Purpose. **2)** God Made You For a Reason, God Never Does

Things Accidentally, God Never Makes Mistakes, God's Motive for Creating You was His Love. **3)** Nothing Means More than Knowing God's Purpose for Your Life, God's Purpose Simplifies Your Life, God's Purpose Focuses Your Life.

- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).

Class Finish

- **Query to Opine:** Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: *In spite of all the advertising [and distractions] around us, how can we remind ourselves that life is really about living for God not ourselves?*
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Three

Session Name: Your Steps Have Been Ordered

Scripture: *Psalm 37:23*

Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness by what students have learned. With this stated, Instructor will have Students share verbally what they learned in previous class. Instructor is to write answers on board that each student gives. Students can feel free to use their notes. Instructor may participate in review to assist students if necessary. This week's session review is focused on "Purpose."
- **Student Participation:** Note, this class is not designed to be taught solely by "lecture style". Therefore, participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on the class material being taught. 1) Have students describe *in what ways has God ordered their steps in life*. 2) Instructor should inform students that this answer could mean their steps being ordered out of a situation, to church, school, marriage, job, etc. Answers are to be written on the board by the Instructor, while he or she encourages students to write answers in their notes. This will help students to become familiar with classmates' lives in comparison to their own.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring a Bible with them to each session for the sole intention of their spiritual growth and development. 1) Instructor is to exegete the above Scripture (*Psalm 37:23*), emphasizing how God is in charge of our lives from a biblical perspective. 2) The Instructor is also to select students to read Scriptures from class handout to confirm the biblical *ordering of individual's steps*.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching.** The Instructor is to select students to volunteer to read quotes from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.
- **Session Book: God of the Oppressed by James Cone.** (Introduce book and author).
- **Teach Lesson:** Instructor is to tie in one quote from book, draw on the board three columns. The headings of each should be, *Israelites journey out of Egypt, Wilderness, Promised Land*. Give specific examples comparing Israelites journey.

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Four

Session Name: A Key Essential for New Direction

Scripture: *Phil 2: 1-5, Eph. 4:17-23*

Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness as teachers, by having students to demonstrate what have learned. Therefore, the Instructor will have students share verbally what they learned in class the previous week. The Instructor is to write the answers on the board that each student gives. The students can feel free to use their notes to participate. This will encourage the students to share their answers. The Instructor may contribute in the review portion to assist the students if necessary. (Session Four is to have all three previous classes reviewed.)
- **Student Participation:** The class is not designed to be taught solely by lecture style. Participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on the class material being taught. Instructor is to have students to *describe in what ways their minds need to be renewed in order for them to go where God is sending them*. The Instructor is to write the answers on the board and students are to take notes. This will help students to become familiar with their classmates' lives in comparison to their own.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring a Bible with them to each session for the sole intention of their spiritual growth and development. 1) The Instructor is to exegete the above Scriptures. (*Phil 2: 1-5, Eph. 4:17-23*). 2) Ask for students to volunteer reading Scriptures from the class handout (to help them comprehend *the condition “the mind” should be in* from a biblical perspective. Our minds need to link to Jesus – to be Christ-like).
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** The Instructor is to select students to volunteer to read quotes from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.
- **Session Book: *Spirit of the Mind* by Casey Treat** (chap. 1). (Introduce book and author).
- **Teach Lesson:** 1) Instructor is to ask students to define the word “renew.” 2) Ask students to describe why their mind needs to be renewed in order for them to go where God is sending them. Instructor is to write answers on the board and students are to

incorporate them into their notes. Instructor is to teach students reasons for news ways of thinking.

- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).

Class Finish

- **Query to Opine:** Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: *What will you do differently this week to change the state of your mind in a positive way?*
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Five

Session Name: Transformation Leads to Alteration

Scripture: *Rom. 12:2-3, Eph. 4:17-24*

Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor. Students should also fill out class evaluation of Instructor's teaching, using forms that have been created.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness as teachers by having the students to demonstrate what they have learned. In this session, begin to let students review former lesson by coming to blackboard and writing one or two things they learned from previous class. Again, this is an effective way to encourage the students to share what they have accomplished.
- **Student Participation:** The class is not designed to be taught solely by lecture style. Participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on class material on the session sheet being taught. 1) Instructor is to have students to **define what "transformation" means**, and 2) **describe what is the most difficult thing about changing**. These answers are to be written on the board by the Instructor, while he or she encourages students to write answers in their notebooks. This will encourage students to be participatory, prompting a sense of leadership.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring a Bible with them to each session for the intention of their spiritual growth and development. 1) Exegete above Scriptures (*Rom.12:2-3, Eph. 4:17-23*), emphasizing how to attain "transformation" from the biblical perspective. (2) Have students discuss what the Scriptures mean to them.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** Select students to volunteer to read quotes from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.
- **Session Book:** *Spirit of the Mind* by Casey Treat. (Introduce book and author).
- **Teach Lesson**
- **Dialogue Period:** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).

Class Finish

- **Query to Opine**: Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: ***What can you do differently in your transformation process in order to grow?***
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Six

Session Name: Spinning a New Web (Decision Making)

Scripture: *Duet. 30:19, Joshua 24:15*

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness as teachers by having the students to demonstrate what they have learned. In this session, because of upcoming class participation have students share what they learned from the previous week.
- **Student Participation:** The class is not designed to be taught solely by lecture style. Participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on class material on the session sheet being taught. 1) The Instructor is to have students to break up into small groups. Groups 1 and 2 are to work separately. Each group is to discuss the following: What key *decisions* do we make in life? What informs our *decision making*? What do you do before a decision is made? What parts of you are involved in *decision making*? 2) Instructor is to have students come to the board and write their answers. This will encourage students to be participatory, prompting a sense of leadership within their group.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring a Bible with them to each session for the intention of their spiritual growth and development. 1) Instructor is to exegete above Scriptures (*Duet. 30:19, Joshua 24:15*), emphasizing decision making from a biblical perspective. 2) Have students to discuss what the Scriptures mean to them.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** Select students to volunteer to read quotes from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.
- **Session Book:** *Spirit of the Mind* by Casey Treat. (Introduce book and author).
- **Teach Lesson**
- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).

Class Finish

- **Query to Opine**: Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: ***How will you make decisions differently? Be specific.***
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Seven

Session Name: Knowledge is Critical to the Thought Process

Scripture: *Gen. 2:8-17*

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness as teachers by having the students to demonstrate what they have learned. In this session, because of the upcoming class participation, just request students to share what they learned from the previous week. *(Students are not to look at their notes for this review.)

Student Participation: The class is not designed to be taught solely by lecture style. Participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section of the class gives students a chance to share their thoughts on material from the session sheet being taught. The Instructor is to have students to break up into small groups. Groups 1 and 2 are to work separately. Each group is to formulate a *denotation* for the word “knowledge.” Each group’s *definition* must include three strong sentences. (10-15 minutes is given for the students to do this exercise.) Students are to come to the board and write their answers. This will encourage students to be participatory, prompting a sense of both empowerment and leadership. 2) Instructor is to discuss the answers with the class.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring their Bible with them to each session. This is meant for the intention of their spiritual growth and development. 1) The Instructor is to exegete the above Scripture (*Gen. 2:8-17*), emphasizing what “knowledge” is from a biblical perspective. 2) The Instructor is to have students to discuss what the Scriptures from handout sheet mean to them.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** The Instructor is to select students to volunteer to read quotes from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.
- **Session Book:** *The Courage to Teach* by Parker J. Palmer **“Knowing in Community” chp. 4.** (Introduce book and author).
- **Teach Lesson**

Class Finish

- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).
- **Query to Opine**: Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: *In what ways will you seek to attain knowledge? (Be specific)*
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Eight

Session Name: The Crucial Tool Needed to Reach Your Destiny: The Value of Wisdom

Scripture: *Prov. 8:1-36*

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness by what students have learned. With this stated, Instructor will have Students share-verbally what they learned in previous class. Instructor is to write answers on board that each student gives. Students can feel free to use their notes. Instructor may participate in review to assist students if necessary. This week's session review is focused on "knowledge."
- **Student Participation:** Note this class is not designed to be taught solely by "lecture style." Therefore, participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on the class material being taught. Have students to break up into small groups. Groups 1 and 2 are to work separately. They are to look together at **Proverbs 8**, and find out as much as they can about "wisdom" from the text. (10-15 minutes is given for the students to do this exercise.)
- Optional (based on time): Students are to come to the board and write their answers. This will encourage students to be participatory, prompting a sense of both empowerment and leadership. Instructor is to discuss the answers with the class.

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring their Bible with them to each session. This is meant for the intention of their spiritual growth and development. 1) The Instructor is to exegete the above Scripture (**Prov. 8**) in an overall way emphasizing what "wisdom" is from a biblical perspective. 2) Have students to discuss what the Scriptures from handout sheet mean to them.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** The Instructor is to select students to volunteer to read quotes from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.

- Session Book: *Is This All There is to Life?: Answers from Ecclesiastes* by Ray C. Stedman.
- Teach Lesson

Class Finish

- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).
- **Query to Opine**: Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: *In what ways will you use wisdom to help you decide advancing into God's purpose for your life? (Spiritual and academics)*.
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Nine

Session Name: The Necessary Relationship for Ascending into God's Purpose for your Life

Scripture: *Psalm 63*

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** Teachers can gage their effectiveness as teachers by having the students to demonstrate what they have learned. In this session, because of upcoming class participation, Instructor is to request that have students share what they learned from the previous week. Students can feel free to use their notes. This session's review is focused on "wisdom."
- **Student Participation:** Note, this class is not designed to be taught solely by "lecture style." Therefore, participation from students is of utmost importance. We must hear from all of the voices, each voice is valuable. This section gives students a chance to share their thoughts on the class material being taught. 1) Each student is to describe their relationship with God using one word. 2) The Instructor is to write the following on the board "My relationship with God can be described as..." The students are to finish this sentence using the one word (adjective) that expresses their relationship best. 3) The Instructor is to write each answer on the board accordingly as students answer. 4) Once all the answers have been given, the Instructor is to challenge students to explain why that one word defines their relationship. That is, "My relationship with God can be described as...*Unique* (why) because of *the way God talks to me that is different from anyone else*."

Class Focus

- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring their Bible with them to each session. This is meant for the intention of their spiritual growth and development. The Instructor is to exegete the above Scripture (*Psalm 63*) in an overall way, emphasizing what "the intensity of being in an intimate relationship with God" means from a biblical perspective.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** The Instructor is to select students to volunteer to **read quotes** from session handout sheet that inspire them the

most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.

- **Session Book:** *Called to Intimacy* by George A. Maloney.
- **Teach Lesson**

Class Finish

- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).
- **Query to Opine**: Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: *In what ways will you build your relationship with God?*
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Ten

Session Name: The Synchronization of Spirituality & Education: An Innovation of Liberation for Those in the Recovery Process

Scripture: *Proverbs 9:9*

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: As the class begins, have all students to fill out attendance sheets, in-class assignments, consent forms, registration forms, etc. Team members can assist with this endeavor.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class:** In this session, because of the guest speaker, the **Class Review** is to be pushed back until after the presentation. The “Progression in Session” Instructor will make opening remarks regarding the upcoming classes, attendance, bus trip, graduation celebration, etc., and then introduce speaker.

Class Focus

- This session will have an **Educational Speaker** (an Addiction Specialist) who will share with the class specific opportunities for students to obtain their CASAC counseling certificates. The professional speaker is allowed 45 minutes to engage class including questions and answers.
- Instructor will then do a brief **Review** of the prior class (intimacy with God) and then discuss the synchronicity of Spirituality and Schooling in church-based settings as an innovative approach or treatment option for persons in recovery.
- **Shift message toward Biblical Teaching:** Students are encouraged from the very first class to bring their Bible with them to each session. This is meant for the intention of their spiritual growth and development. The Instructor is to exegete the above Scripture (*Prov. 9:9*), emphasizing the value of having both spirituality and instruction (education) from a biblical perspective.
- **Shift message toward Intellectual/Scholarly Teaching:** The Instructor is to select students to volunteer to *read quotes* from session handout sheet that inspire them the most and explain to classmates why (Or) students can say something about the author of the quote.
- **Session Book:** *What to Expect in Seminary* by Virginia Samuel Cetuk.
- **Teach Lesson**

Class Finish

- **Dialogue period** (Question/Answer time among students and Instructor).

- **Query to Opine**: Whatever the query of the session is, it should be answered by one student after the session is over, while the students are gathered in a circle (right before the closing prayer is said). This week's query to opine is: ***What preparation is needed for your spiritual/academic growth?***
- **Closing Prayer** (all prayer requests will be taken at this time).
- **Fellowship** (for those who want to stay behind and reflect on meeting with each other).

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Eleven

Session Name Nearing Your Destination

Scripture: James 1:5

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: Have all students fill out attendance sheets, *in-class assignments*, consent forms, registration forms, etc.

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer**.
- **Review Previous Class** (There is no Class Review for this Session).

Class Focus

This entire session will encompass an **Educational Symposium**. The forum is to be made up representatives from academic institutions (colleges, etc.) in the neighboring community. There are to be three presenters. One individual will address the basic academic needs of the students who do not yet have their GEDs. The second person is to inspire those in the class who have their GED and/or high school diplomas, regarding the value of attaining their Bachelor's Degree. The third speaker is to propel those with their Bachelor's Degrees to see the importance of studying at the Master's level. If possible, a fourth speaker can be made available to enthuse those with their Master's Degree to see both the impact and implication that attaining a Ph.D. would have not just on their lives, but on society at large. Each speaker is to be credentialed in the academic area in which he or she speaks (or have a number of years of experience in the field in which he or she will speak). "Progression in Session" will make available to the speaker (if requested) PowerPoint access.

- A **Program Booklet** is to be designed for students/class (it will be the session handout sheet). It is in this booklet that the names, skills, expertise, and years of experience of the presenters will be displayed.
- Progression in Session's Promo Team will provide refreshments.
- Question and Answers for Presenters.

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class Guidebook

Session Twelve

Session Name: Flying to Your Purpose

Scripture:

Opening Prayer

Class Forepart: Have all students fill out attendance sheets (to match bus sign-up sheet).

Class Format

- Select a student from the class to read **Scripture (To be read on the bus)**.
- Select a student from the class to say **Opening Prayer (To be said on the bus by eldest minister)**.
- **Review:** A general review will be done on the bus trip by students sharing what they learned over the entire course. Instructor can throw out questions students can elaborate on their answers.

Class Focus

- This entire (**Final Class**) will encompass a **Bus Trip** to a Theological Institution/Seminary for students to engage in the experience of an open house. The church or chartered bus should meet in front of the church and leave in enough time to make the scheduled appointment at the school (keeping traveling and traffic in mind). Instructor is to give a 15-minute *grace period* after stated time bus is to leave for students who may have extenuating circumstances.

A butterfly undergoes four stages or phases in the process of transformation. The fourth and final stage is the emergence of the adult butterfly. After Friday's class, consider yourself to have earned your wings. As you know, we will be going on a field trip to the college campus and Session 12's focus is "Flying to Your Purpose."

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation
Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan
7:00- 8:30 p.m.

Session One 4/13/12

Pathway to Progress

“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable...Every step toward the goal...requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals”
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“Progress is the attraction that moves humanity” Marcus Garvey

“Since new developments are the products of a creative mind, we must therefore stimulate and encourage that type of mind in every way possible”
George Washington Carver

“Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and spacious and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who are entering through it. But the gate is narrow (contracted by pressure) and the way is straitened and compressed that leads away to life, [progress] and few are those who find it.”
(Matt. 7:14 Amp)

Scripture----- Matt. 7:14

Prayer----- Sis. Prudence Tolliver (both will facilitate all classes)

Lesson Format

1. Welcome to all Students/What is the reason you are here? What quote inspires you/Why?
2. Introduction to Progression in Session class (What you can expect while embarking down this new path to reach your Destiny).
3. Go over the syllabus together.
4. Develop a set of working rules for the class.
5. Question /Answer –Dialogue period among participants.

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

4/20/12

Session Two

A Journey With Purpose

"And we know All things work together for the good of those who love God and to those who are the called of God according to His purpose"

(Rom. 8:28)

To everything there is a season and a time. A time for every purpose under heaven"

(Eccl. 3:1)

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future

(Jer. 29:11)

It is God Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began" (2Tim. 1:9)

"God Almighty created each and every one of us for [a purpose and] a place in the world, and for the least of us to think that we were created only to be what we are and not what we can make ourselves, is to impute an improper motive to the Creator for creating us."

Marcus Garvey

[Knowing] "What God intended for you goes far beyond anything you imagined"

Oprah Winfrey

Scripture—Rom. 8:26-28

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Before class begins: brief discussion /Quick Review last class
2. Class Focus: What is your Purpose? (participants)
3. **Lesson: God's Purpose for your Life** Rick Warren's: **Purpose Driven Life**
Chp.1,2,3,
4. **Question to Ponder:** In spite of all the advertising [and distractions] around us, how can we remind ourselves that life is really about living for God, and ourselves?
5. Dialogue period among participants/instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Quotes by individuals acquired from African American quotes

<http://africanamericanquotes.org/purpose.html>

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

4/27/12

Session Three

Your Steps have Been Ordered

“If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk [take steps], if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“Baby steps count, as long as you are going forward.”
Elon Musk

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“Order My Steps in Thy Word”

(Psalm

119:133)

The Steps of a good [individual] are ordered by the LORD
(Psalm 37:23)

Scripture

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick Review last class
2. Class Focus: Describe in what ways has God ordered your steps in life.
3. Lesson: **The Direction if Forward: God places us in the right place at the right time.**
4. *Question to Ponder:* Now that you know God’s purpose for your life, what do you need to do to follow His voice?
5. Dialogue period among participants/instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Progression in Session Class: Stages and Phases of Transformation

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

5/11/12

Session Four
A Key Essential for New Direction

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”
(*Philippians 2:5*)

“You will keep [all] in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You: Because [they] trust in You.”
(*Isaiah 26:3*)

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”
(*Romans 12:1-2*)

“Be renewed in the Spirit of your mind.”
(*Ephesians 4:23*)

“Liberate the minds of [individuals] and ultimately you will liberate the bodies of [individuals].”
Marcus Garvey

“As long as the mind is enslaved, the body can never be free. Psychological freedom, a firm sense of self-esteem, is the most powerful weapon against the long night of physical slavery.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“There is an elasticity in the human mind, capable of bearing much, but which will not show itself, until a certain weight of affliction be put upon it; its powers may be compared to those vehicles whose springs are so contrived that they get on smoothly enough when loaded, but jolt confoundedly when they have nothing to bear.”

Charles

Caleb Colton

Scripture Reading – Phil 2: 1-5 Eph. 4:17-23

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick Review
2. Student Participation: Describe why your mind needs to be renewed in order for you to go where God is sending you (Be specific).
3. Lesson: **Renewal of the Spirit of the Mind: A New Direction Requirement.**

Session Book: **Spirit of the Mind By Casey Treat** (Chap. 1).

4. *Query to Opine:* What will you do differently this week to change the state of your mind in a positive way?
5. Dialogue period among participants/instructor

Closing Prayer Kim Johnson (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)
Quotes found on http://www.notable-quotes.com/m/mind_quotes.htm 5/10/12

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

5/18/12

Session Five

Transformation Leads to Alteration

“Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change. ”

Jim Rohn

“Sometimes you’ve got to let everything go—purge yourself...If you’re unhappy with anything [or anybody] whatever is bringing you down, get rid of it. Because you’ll find that when you are free, your true creativity, your true self comes out.”

Tina Turner

“I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can’t accept not trying.”

Michael Jordan

“The whole point for being alive is to evolve into the complete person you are intended to be.” Oprah Winfrey

“You must change in order to survive.”

Pearl Bailey

“We can’t become what we need to be by remaining what we are.”

Oprah

Winfrey

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

(Rom.

12:2-3)

Scripture

The Old Way Has to Go

“And so I insist – and God backs me up on this – that there be no going along with the crowd, the empty-headed, mindless crowd. They’ve refused for so long to deal with God that they’ve lost touch not only with God but with reality itself. They can’t think straight anymore. Feeling no pain, they let themselves go in sexual obsession, addicted to every sort of perversion. But that’s no life for you. You learned Christ! My assumption is that you have paid careful attention to Him, been well instructed in the truth precisely as we have it in Jesus. Since, then, we do not have the excuse of ignorance, everything – and I do mean everything – connected with that old way of life has to go. It’s rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life – a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you.”

Eph. 4:17-24 Message

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick Review
2. Student Participation: Describe the most difficult thing about “changing.”
3. Lesson: **Stages and Phases of Transformation: The Process of Change.**
Session Book: **Spirit of the Mind By Casey Treat** (pp. 19-25).
4. *Query to Opine:* What can you do differently in your transformation process in order to grow?
5. Dialogue period among participants/instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

5/25/12

Session Six
Spinning a New Web (Decision Making)

"Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide." *Napoleon Bonaparte*

We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him (3rd Step N.A)

"Using the power of decision gives you the capacity to get past any excuse to change any and every part of your life in an instant."
Anthony Robbins

"Decisions become easier when your will to please God outweighs your will to please the world." Anso Coetzer

"...anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God"
(James 4:4)

*"The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray
Prov. 12:26)*

"But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."
(Joshua 24:15)

"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live"
(Duet. 30:18)

Scripture: Duet. 30:18, Joshua 24:15
Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick Review—Stages and Phases of Transformation
2. Student Participation: Break up into small groups. Discuss following questions. What key *decisions* do we make in life? What informs our *decision making*? (What do you do before you make a decision?) What parts of you are involved in *decision making*?
3. Lesson: **Spinning a New Web: Decision Making**
Session Book: **Spirit of the Mind By Casey Treat** (Chp. 2.)

4. *Query to Opine:* How make will you make decisions differently? (Be specific)
5. Dialogue period among participants/Instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Quotes taken from www.decisionmaking-solution.com 5/24/12

*Stages and Phases of Transformation
Progression in Session Classes*

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

6/1/12

Session Seven

Knowledge is Critical to the Thought Process

1. *[Knowledge is critical to the Thought Process] “There is in this world no such force as the force of a person determined to rise. The human soul cannot be permanently chained.”*

W.E. DuBois

2. *“Knowledge is of two kinds: we know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information about it.”*

Samuel Jackson

3. *“Rarely do we find [individuals] willingly [to] engage in hard, solid thinking. There is an almost universal quest for easy answers and half-baked solutions. Nothing pains some people more than having to think [or participate in [gaining knowledge].”*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

4. *“Therefore my people have gone into captivity, Because they have no knowledge.”*
(Isaiah 5:13)

5. *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...”*
(Hosea 4:6)

6. *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”*

(Proverbs 9:10)

7. *“Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours Then God said to Solomon: ‘Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king—wisdom and knowledge are granted to you.’”*

(1 Chron. 1:10-12)

8. *“Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.”*
(Hosea 6:3)

Scripture: Gen. 2:8-17

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick review from previous week – Spinning a New Web (Decision Making) – No Notes
2. Student Participation: Break up into small groups. Groups 1 and 2 are to work separately and formulate a *denotation* for the word “knowledge.” Your *definition* must include three strong sentences.
3. Lesson: **Knowledge is Critical to the Thought Process**

Session Book: **The Courage to Teach---“Knowing in Community” Chp.**

4

4. *Query to Opine:* In what ways will you seek to attain knowledge? (Be specific)
5. Dialogue period among participants/Instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Quotes from <http://africanamericanquotes.org/education.html>

*Stages and Phases of Transformation
Progression in Session*
Rev. Angela Ryan **6/8/12**
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Session Eight
The Crucial Tool Needed to Reach Your Destiny: The Value of Wisdom

“Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers.”

Alfred lord Tennyson

“Learning sleeps and snores in libraries, but wisdom is everywhere, wide awake, on tiptoe.” **Josh Billings**

“Memory is the mother of all wisdom.”

Aeschylus

“Turn your wounds into wisdom.”

Oprah Winfrey

“The doors of wisdom are never shut.”

Benjamin Franklin

“The truest wisdom is a resolute determination.”

Napoleon

Bonaparte

“Joyful is the person who finds wisdom, the one who gains understanding.”

(Prov. 3:13)

“Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.”

(Prov. 4:7)

“But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding.”

(Job 28:12)

“For the LORD grants wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

(Prov. 2:6)

“Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? At the highest point along the way, where the paths meet, she takes her stand; beside the gate leading into the city, at the entrance, she cries aloud: “To you, O people, I call out; I raise my voice to all...”

(Prov. 8:1-4)

“For God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who is good in His sight...”

(Ecc. 2:26)

Scripture Reading: Prov. 8:1-36

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick Review previous class (knowledge)
2. Student Participation: Break up into your teams (1&2), discuss all that you can find about wisdom in Prov. Chapter 8.
3. Lesson: **The Crucial Tool to Reach Your Destiny: The Value of Wisdom**
Session Book: *Is This All There is to Life? Answers from Ecclesiastes* by Ray C. Stedman
4. *Query to Opine:* In what ways will you use wisdom to help you decide advancing into God's purpose for your life? (spirituality, academics)
5. Dialogue period among participants/Instructor

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

6/22/12

Session Nine

The Necessary Relationship for Ascending into God's Purpose for your Life

"The Good News of Christianity is...that God calls us to [be in] intimacy with Him]" George A. Maloney

God isn't angry at His people and won't be angry at anyone who comes to Him. Our sin is big...[but] God's grace is bigger. It's okay to trust God because He never makes mistakes. You can laugh and sing and be free, because the Son makes you free [indeed]. You don't become faithful in order to get loved and get free...you are already free and loved that is why it's possible to be faithful."
Steve Brown

Outside of Christ, I am only a sinner, but in Christ, I am saved. Outside of Christ, I am empty; in Christ, I am full. Outside of Christ, I am weak; in Christ, I am strong. Outside of Christ, I cannot; in Christ, I am more than able. Outside of Christ, I have been defeated; in Christ, I am already victorious. How meaningful are the words "in Christ."

Watchmen Nee

God is always previous, God is always there first... if you have any desire [to be in] God, [or] for the things of God, it is God Himself who put you there [in the first place]"
A.W. Tozer

"We are called to ever increasing consciousness of the indwelling community of God's family, The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"
George A. Maloney

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new"
2 Cor. 5:17

"There is therefore now, no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit"
(Romans 8:1)

"I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me, and He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love Him and manifest Myself to him."
(John 14:20-21)

"I Am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."
(John 15:5)

NOTE: ALL ESSAYS ARE TO BE HANDED IN BEFORE CLASS

Scripture Reading

Opening Prayer

Class Format

1. Quick Review from previous class ("*wisdom*")
2. Student Participation: Describe your relationship with God. (Be specific)
3. Lesson: **The Necessary Relationship for Ascending into God's Purpose for your Life**

Session Book: *Called to Intimacy* by George A. Maloney

4. *Query to Opine:* In what ways will you build your relationship with God?
5. Dialogue period among participants/Instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Quotes taken from <http://dailychristianquote.com/dcqrrelations>

Stages and Phases of Transformation: Progression in Session Class

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

6/29/12

Session Ten

A New Outlook:

The Synchronization of Spirituality & Education: An Innovation of Liberation for Those in the Recovery Process

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed” (2 Timothy 2:15)

“Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed [you will progress] in all you do.” (Joshua 1:8)

“...Ezra had determined to study and obey the Law of the LORD and to teach those decrees and regulations to the people of Israel” (Ezra 7:10)

“Keep this in mind: The Teacher was considered wise, and he taught the people everything he knew. He listened carefully to many proverbs, studying and classifying them” (Eccl. 12:9)

“Education is the key to unlock the golden door to freedom” George Washington Carver

“Education is a precondition to survival in America today” Marian Wright Edelman

“In a global economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity—it is a prerequisite. And yet, we have one of the highest high school dropout rates of any industrialized nation. And half of the students who begin college never finish. This is a prescription for economic decline. So tonight, I ask every American to commit to at least one year or more of a higher education or career training. This can be community college or a four year school; vocational training or an apprenticeship. But every American will need to get more than a high school diploma. And dropping out of high school is no longer an option. It’s not just quitting on yourself, it’s quitting on your country. That’s why we will provide the support necessary for all young Americans to complete college and meet a new goal: By 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world”

~ President
Barak Obama
2009 State of the

Union address

Scripture Reading: Prov. 9:9

Opening Prayer

Class Format

Dr. Howard Fogel, educational director of the Center for Addiction Studies and Research, will be speaking about CASAC counseling opportunities.

1. Quick Review from previous class (“intimacy with God ”)
2. Student Participation: Discuss three of your goals
3. Lesson: A New Outlook: The Synchronization of Spirituality & Education: An Innovation of Liberation for those in the Recovery Process

Session Book: *What to Expect in Seminary* by Virginia Samuel Cetuk

4. *Query to Opine*: What preparation is needed for your spiritual/academic growth?
5. Dialogue period among participants/Instructor

Closing Prayer (all prayer requests will be taken at this time)

Stages and Phases of Transformation

Progression in Session

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

7/6/12

Session Eleven

Nearing Your Destination

- **To be designed as a program booklet for educational symposium**

“The doors of wisdom are never shut.”

(Benjamin Franklin)

Scripture: James 1: 5

Prayer

Opening Remarks and Introduction of Presenters: by Instructor

Class Format

Presenters will be listed in the order they will speak.

Stages and Phases of Transformation

Progression in Session

Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

7:00-8:30 p.m.

7/13/12

Session Twelve

Flying to your Purpose

Class Format

1. Before bus leaves have someone pray (preferably a minister).
2. Class Focus: As bus takes off Instructor is to have review/overview of class with students. Ask what were the most memorable experiences about the class? Most challenging times.
3. The bus ride to the school/seminary should be designed to be an exciting experience for the students.
4. A collection will be taken up for the driver, in the spirit of love and giving (which equals worship unto God). If anyone cannot give, he or she should is not to be made to feel uncomfortable.



Guidebook Slides: INNOVATIVE PROJECT MODEL)

Progressive Solution

Innovation

- Ideas
- Imagination
- Inspiration from God
- Develop a holistic curriculum
- Spirituality
- Education

Program Objective Transformation

Individual vs. Illness

- Reconciliation
- Regeneration
- Edification
- Positive Mental Stimulation
- Education
- Liberation
- Sickness
- Disease
- Addiction
- Depression
- Co-dependency
- Attitudes & Behaviors

Preparation For Destiny

Destination

- Sound spirituality
- Self Esteem
- Schooling
- Social Skills
- Job Readiness
- Viable Candidates to be a part of our community
- Churches prepared to serve the recovery population

Program Forecast

Prevention/Intervention for today's youth

Guidebook Bibliography

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APPENDIX V
TRANSFORMATIONAL VIDEO

Please see DVD marked “Transformation Video.”

APPENDIX W
CREATIVE SONG

“Stages and Phases of Transformation”

**In stages you prepared me
To reach my goal, my destiny
I see---(pause) My life is to be a living testimony
That there's grace even for a sinner like me**

“Chorus: Transformation"- Doesn't happen right away, Begins s on God's appointed day. God's purpose is for a special day *Stages and Phases*, My change seemed like it took *ages and ages*.

**It's been a long,(long),journey
But when I look back on the progress I've made
The Truth is.... It's no- where complete
But with your grace, I know you'll take me to the next phase**

Chorus:
Stages and Phases, My change seemed like it took *ages and ages*, so many *gazes and gazes*, now I'm lifting up *praises and praises*

**The road ahead is long
And sometimesI stumble as I go
But with each step I take –I feel a change- praise your holy name
I lift my head high and not in shame**

Chorus: Transformation" Doesn't happen Right away, Begins on God's appointed day, Frustration begins to slip away, Liberation begins to come our way, *Stages and Phases*, My change seemed like it took *ages and ages*, so many *gazes and gazes*, now I'm lifting up *praises and praises*

**There's nothing I can't do
with You on my side
Oh what joy I have renewed
So I wave my pain away**

Chorus: Stages and Phases, My change seemed like it took *ages and ages*, so many *gazes and gazes*, now I'm lifting up *praises and praises*

In phases you've transformed me

From addiction—thank God, not the benediction

From the pit, to the pulpit

I've earned your degree---thank God I'm free

Chorus Transformation” Doesn't happen Right away, Begins on God's appointed day, Jubilation is the order of the day-- Salvation's here to stay.

Stages and Phases, My change seemed like it took *ages and ages*, so many *gazes and gazes*, now I'm lifting up *praises and praises*

Extra lyrics you can fit in Black butterfly—I can fly

I believe I can fly

Chorus

“Transformation”- Doesn't happen right away, Begins s on God's appointed day God's purpose is for a special day –When it happens, Frustration begins to slip away, Liberation begins to come our way, and Salvation is here to stay.

Stages and Phases, My change seemed like it took *ages and ages*, so many *gazes and gazes*, now I'm lifting up *praises and praises*

APPENDIX X

ADMINISTRATION BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX Y

RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX Z

NED LEADERSHIP TRAINING

North Eastern Episcopal Region
Leadership Training Institute
19 Lincoln Avenue
New Rochelle, New York 10801

Rev. Michael J. Rouse Sr.
General Chairperson

The Right Reverend Roy A. Holmes
Presiding Prelate

August 14, 2012

Pastors:

I am hopeful that you have had a restful summer and that the Christ who loves us all is continuing to prosper you.

This letter comes to announce that the North Eastern Episcopal District Leadership Training Institute will convene on Wednesday, September 26 - Friday, September 28, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1800 East Putnam Avenue, Old Greenwich, Connecticut.

Bishop Holmes has instructed me to advise you of his expectation that all clergy, conference and district officers be in attendance.

When making your reservation, please call the Hyatt Regency Hotel at 1-203-637-1234. You will need to state that you are with the AME Zion Church. The hotel room rate is \$151.00 per night (single or double). All reservations must be made by Monday, September 10, 2012. It is imperative that we make haste and get our reservations in!!

Registration Forms, along with the \$150 registration fee, are to be sent to the District Registrar as indicated on the bottom of your Registration Form. Checks should be made payable to the N.E.D. Leadership Training Institute.

Each church is asked to contribute \$175.00 for support. Please make all checks or money orders payable to the N.E.D. Leadership Institute, and mail them to Rev. Terry Jones, 93 Ridgefield Street, Hartford, CT 06112.

The Institute will begin on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. Those who have pre-registered will be able to pick up their packets at that time. Worship Service will begin at 7:30 P.M.

We ask that you encourage your officers and members to attend the Institute. Timely distribution of this information will enable us to adequately plan for this learning experience. Please do not mail any registration forms after September 12, 2012. Bring them with you to the Institute.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Rev. Michael J. Rouse Sr.,
Chairperson, Leadership Training Institute

cc: Bishop Roy A. Holmes

Appendix AA

In-Class Assignment

Progression in Session: Stages and Phases of Transformation
Instructor: Rev. Angela Ryan

In Class Assignment

Name: _____

1. Please briefly describe your spirituality: (a) intimate with God (b) know God exists
(c) attend church occasionally. Explain how you want to progress:

2. Please briefly describe your recovery status: (a) clean – one day or more (b) active/life unmanageable. Explain how you want to progress:

3. Please briefly describe your education: (a) Some high school (b) GED (c) High School graduate (d) College degree. Explain how you want to progress:

APPENDIX BB

STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

COURSE TITLE: PROGRESSION IN SESSION SEMESTER: APRIL 13-JULY 13, 2012
INSTRUCTOR: REV. ANGELA RYAN

A summary of the evaluations of this course will be available to the instructor after the course's conclusion. All scores will remain anonymous.

CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER:

5=YES	4=USUALLY	3=RARELY	2=NO	1=N/A NO APPLICABLE
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1. The instructor communicates clearly. 1. _____
5 4 3 2 1
2. The instructor has an expert command of the course material. 2. _____
5 4 3 2 1
3. The goals and the syllabus are clear. 3. _____
5 4 3 2 1
4. The instructor encourages individual questions and contributions. 4. _____
5 4 3 2 1
5. The instructor is willing to help others. 5. _____
5 4 3 2 1
6. Class discussions are focused and meaningful. 6. _____
5 4 3 2 1
7. The instructor presents and is open to differing points of view. 7. _____
5 4 3 2 1
8. Assignments, including tests and papers, and other means of evaluating student's progress are graded fairly and constructively. 8. _____
5 4 3 2 1
9. The assigned texts are well used. 9. _____
5 4 3 2 1
10. The instructor's overall teaching is effective. 10. _____
5 4 3 2 1
11. The course was a worthwhile experience. 11. _____
5 4 3 2 1
12. Would you rate the instructor's attitude toward the students as warm and friendly? 12. _____
5 4 3 2 1
13. Was the instructor always prompt and present for the entire class? 13. _____
5 4 3 2 1
14. Class members appreciate and learn from each other's input. 14. _____
5 4 3 2 1

OVERALL APPRAISAL – CIRCLE EITHER YES OR NO

15. Does instructor show commitment to improving students' communicative skills/writing, speaking and reading? 15. YES NO
16. Would you recommend the course to be repeated? 16. YES NO
17. Would you recommend the instructor to teach this course again? 17. YES NO

APPENDIX CC

HOW A RESOLUTION BECOMES LAW



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